

Ordinary Board Meeting

Minutes

Friday 5th March 2021

Meeting being held on zoom





OUR VISION

Our vision is for connected, inclusive and resilient communities that are supported to grow and thrive.



MISSION SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES IS OUR MISSION. WE HELP PEOPLE:



Connect
We are responsive and bring people together



Belong
We are inclusive and work with you



Learn
Our free resources allow minds to explore and create



OUR VALUES

Relationships
We build relationships with our stakeholders, communities and each other.

Excellence
We will deliver excellence in everything we do.

Bravery
We anticipate and bravely adapt with the changing needs of our communities.

Contents

1.	Statement of Acknowledgement 	4
2.	Our Child Safety Commitment	4
3.	Apologies	4
4.	Declarations of interest/conflict of interest	4
5.	Minutes of previous meeting	4
6.	Standing items	5
6.1.	Business arising from the previous meeting.	5
6.2.	Update from the Community Advisory Committee	5
7.	Questions on notice	6
8.	Reports	6
8.1	Draft Library Plan 2021.25	7
8.2	Draft Budget 2021.22	10
8.3	Quarter 2 Finance and Performance Report – 31 December 2020	14
8.4	Board Meeting Timetable 2021	16
9.	Presentations	17
10.	General Business	17
11.	For information	17
12.	Next Meeting	17



In attendance:

Rick Brown (South Gippsland Shire Council) - Chairperson
Cr. Annemarie McCabe (Baw Baw Shire Council) – Deputy Chairperson
Cr Leticia Laing (Bass Coast Shire Council)
David Welch (Baw Baw Shire Council)
Jodi Kennedy (Bass Coast Shire Council)

WGL Officers

Leanne Williams (Chief Executive Officer)
Linda Fowler (Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Manager People and Culture)
Bec Noone (Manager Marketing and Strategy)

1. Statement of Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are hosting this meeting from the lands of the Gunaikurnai people. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which you all work and live today and welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people who may be participating. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

2. Our Child Safety Commitment

West Gippsland Libraries is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

3. Apologies

Martin Hopley (Baw Baw Shire Council)
Allison Jones (South Gippsland Shire Council)

4. Declarations of interest/conflict of interest

Nil

5. Minutes of previous meeting

Recommendation

That the Board adopt the minutes from the Ordinary meeting held on 4th December 2020.

Resolution

That the Board adopt the minutes from the Ordinary meeting held on 4th December 2020.

Moved: Cr. Annemarie McCabe

Seconded: Cr. Leticia Laing

Carried unanimously

Attachments

Attachment 5.1.1 – Minutes of the Ordinary Board meeting 4th December 2020



6. Standing items

6.1. Business arising from the previous meeting.

Today the Board would like to formally recognise the contribution to West Gippsland Libraries of Nola Thorpe and Mary Schooneveldt as retiring members of the Community Advisory Committee.

Nola has been a long-time member of the CAC, commencing in 2008. Mary has been a member for 3 years. We look forward to continuing to see both of these Library advocates and active community members visiting our libraries in the future. Both Mary and Nola continue to support the spirit of volunteering in the Bass Coast area.

They have both provided incredibly valuable input over the years that has helped shape the service and generously contributed their time travelling around the region to CAC and Board meetings. West Gippsland Libraries and the Board are very grateful for their contribution.

On behalf of the Board and all the staff at West Gippsland Libraries, we would like to thank both Nola and Mary for their valuable contributions. Pictured are Nola (Centre) and Mary (right) and Manager Volunteers and Community Participation, Kathie Olden, at a presentation just prior to Christmas 2020.



6.2. Update from the Community Advisory Committee

The Chairperson of the CAC provided a verbal update of the most recent CAC meeting.

Attachments

Attachment 6.2.1 – Minutes of the CAC Meeting held 4th December 2020

Recommendation

That the Board note the minutes from the Community Advisory Committee meeting held on 4th December 2020.



Resolution

That the Board note the minutes from the Community Advisory Committee meeting held on 4th December 2020.

Moved: Cr. Leticia Laing

Seconded: Jodi Kennedy

Carried unanimously

7. Questions on notice

Nil

8. Reports

8.1 Draft Library Plan 2021.25

Report Prepared by Manager Marketing and Strategy

Executive Summary

The report presents the new Strategic Plan for West Gippsland Libraries. The Strategic Plan is the guiding strategic document for the organisation, setting out our commitment to delivering library services to the communities of Baw Baw, South Gippsland and Bass Coast shires. It features three strategic pillars that are embedded within the organisation's mission: connect; belong; and learn. The Strategy features three overarching goals:

- Making our service available to more people for more hours
- Increase our membership and awareness of our service within the community
- Create more learning opportunities within our service and within the community

A significant factor of this next strategic plan is the positive input and feedback from the community in relation to its formation. There were 2,371 responses and more than 98% of people supported the themes and actions in the plan.

We also asked the community when developing this plan how they rated West Gippsland Libraries as a service. They responded with an overall average of 4.4 stars out of 5. A great reflection of the hard work and passion from our staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact how library services are delivered. Adaptability and agility have been key attributes that have contributed to supporting the community. The strategy reflects the required adaptability with a continued focus on the website as a virtual library and online programs.

The key projects and initiatives we will accomplish are:

- More 24/7 access libraries
- Life skills learning portal
- Website user experience enhancements
- Increase Outreach Services
- Increase at Home Services
- Digital strategy for online resources and services
- Increase in the collection

Recommendation

- a) Endorse the proposed Library Plan 2021-25, including the Strategic Resource Plan, for the purposes of section 125 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act).
 - b) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - i. Give public notice of the preparation of the West Gippsland Libraries Library Plan 2021-25 in accordance with section 125 of the Act; and
 - ii. Make available for public inspection the information required to be made available in accordance with the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 (the Regulations).
 - c) Submissions received under section 223 of the Act will close at 3pm, Wednesday 21st April 2021.
 - d) Consideration be given to any submission on any proposal contained in the Library Plan 2021-25 under section 223 of the Act at the Ordinary meeting of the Board on Friday, 7th May 2021 at 11.30 am.
 - e) A recommendation to adopt the Library Plan 2021-25 will be presented to the Board at its ordinary meeting on Friday, 25th June 2021.
-



Resolution

- a) Endorse the proposed Library Plan 2021-25, including the Strategic Resource Plan, for the purposes of section 125 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act).
- b) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - i. Give public notice of the preparation of the West Gippsland Libraries Library Plan 2021-25 in accordance with section 125 of the Act; and
 - ii. Make available for public inspection the information required to be made available in accordance with the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 (the Regulations).
- c) Submissions received under section 223 of the Act will close at 3pm, Wednesday 21st April 2021.
- d) Consideration be given to any submission on any proposal contained in the Library Plan 2021-25 under section 223 of the Act at the Ordinary meeting of the Board on Friday, 7th May 2021 at 11.30 am.
- e) A recommendation to adopt the Library Plan 2021-25 will be presented to the Board at its ordinary meeting on Friday, 25th June 2021.

Moved: Jodi Kennedy

Seconded: David Welch

Carried unanimously

Community Engagement

To seek input from the community on the development of West Gippsland Libraries next Strategic Plan, a survey was developed and widely promoted in the community. The response rate target of 2,200 was exceeded, with 2,371 responses being received. A summary of the survey is included as attachment 8.1.2 to this report.

This survey was also used to understand more about what people know of our service and how they use it. The survey highlighted that despite the pandemic forcing users to embrace a virtual environment, many still do not know the wide range of online services provided. Increasing awareness and promoting our service is one feature in the next strategic plan.

The new Strategic plan features three strategic pillars that are embedded within the organisation's mission: connect; belong; and learn. The Strategy features three overarching goals:

- Making our service available to more people for more hours
- Increase our membership and awareness of our service within the community
- Create more learning opportunities within our service and within the community

A significant factor of this next strategic plan is the positive input and feedback from the community in relation to its formation. There were 2,371 responses and more than 98% of people supported the themes and actions in the plan.

You can read more detail about the actions in the Strategic Plan document (attachment 8.1.1).

Policy and Legislative Implications

The West Gippsland Libraries Library Plan 2021-25 is prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

- Section 196 – Regional Libraries
- Section 125 – Council Plan
- Section 126 – Strategic Resource Plan
- Section 223 – Right to make a submission.

Conclusion



The Strategic Plan aspires and challenges West Gippsland Libraries to be a service that is equipped to respond to the changing needs of our communities. The strategies within the plan are designed to motivate the organisation to think differently and ensure that we are prepared for the future. It is recommended that the Board endorse the Library Plan 2021-25 and place on public exhibition for input and submissions.

Conflict of Interest

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989, the report author declares that there is no conflict of interest to disclose in providing this report.

Attachments

Attachment 8.1.1 – Strategic Plan 2021-25

Attachment 8.1.2 – Library Plan Engagement Survey Responses Summary



8.2 Draft Budget 2021.22

Report Prepared by Chief Executive Officer

Executive summary

This report presents the 2021.22 Draft Budget for consideration, endorsement and to seek approval for community consultation by the Board.

The Draft Budget has been developed to build on the significant work undertaken in recent years to ensure that West Gippsland Libraries is a modern and dynamic place to connect, belong and learn. This is made possible by the dedication and support of all staff at West Gippsland Libraries. They are the heart of the service and their delivery of high-quality library services to the community is second to none.

The 2021.22 Draft Budget has been developed to support the team at West Gippsland Libraries delivery on the strategies and actions set out in the Library Plan. It has also been developed from first principles to ensure all income and expenditure is reviewed annually to ensure long term financial sustainability.

The major initiatives proposed for the year include providing a 24/7 library service at Mirboo North and Poowong Libraries and to transition West Gippsland Libraries legal entity to a Not-for-Profit as required by the new *Local Government Act 2020*.

West Gippsland Libraries will continue to work closely with the community and member Councils to deliver services that the community is seeking and adapt to the uncertain environment because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This budget also provides the resources to continue to build our outreach services and new and popular programs across the region. We will continue to enhance our collection and in particular the e-resources that are seeing increased demand year on year.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- a) Endorse the Draft Budget 2021.22 contained in attachment 8.2.1 for the purposes of section 127(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).
- b) The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to:
 - i. Give public notice of the preparation of the West Gippsland Libraries Draft Budget 2021.22 in accordance with section 129(1) the Act; and
 - ii. Make available for public inspection the information required to be made available in accordance with the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.
- c) Submissions received under section 223 of the Act will close at 3pm, Wednesday 21st April 2021.
- d) Consideration be given to any submission on any proposal contained in the Draft Budget 2021.22 under section 223 of the Act at an Ordinary meeting of the Board on Friday, 7th May 2021 at 11.30 am.
- e) A recommendation to adopt the Draft Budget 2021.22 will be presented to the Board at its ordinary meeting on Friday, 25th June 2021.

Resolution

That the Board:

- a) Endorse the Draft Budget 2021.22 contained in attachment 8.2.1 for the purposes of section 127(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).
- b) The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to:
 - i. Give public notice of the preparation of the West Gippsland Libraries Draft Budget 2021.22 in accordance with section 129(1) the Act; and
 - ii. Make available for public inspection the information required to be made available in accordance with the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.
- c) Submissions received under section 223 of the Act will close at 3pm, Wednesday 21st April 2021.



- d) Consideration be given to any submission on any proposal contained in the Draft Budget 2021.22 under section 223 of the Act at an Ordinary meeting of the Board on Friday, 7th May 2021 at 11.30 am.
- e) A recommendation to adopt the Draft Budget 2021.22 will be presented to the Board at its ordinary meeting on Friday, 25th June 2021.

Moved: Cr. Leticia Laing

Seconded: Cr. Annemarie McCabe

Carried unanimously

Major projects

There are three projects included in the draft Annual Budget for highlighting. They are:

- Mirboo North Library 24/7 access. Mirboo North Library is not open full time yet it is a growing community. To provide more access to more people and provide convenient access to members, a 24/7 service will be installed with the aim of increasing usage and members.
- Poowong Library 24/7 access. Poowong Library is only open a few hours each week. It is also a growing community. To provide more access to more people and provide convenient access to members, a 24/7 service will be installed with the aim of increasing usage and members.
- Legal entity transition. The Local Government Act 2020 that comes into effect from 1 July 2021 requires Library Corporations to change how they are legally governed. Board discussions have focused on the best option for WGL, which is to transition to a Not-for-Profit company. This is substantiated by the Victorian Auditor General's Council Libraries Performance Audit Report 2019 that highlighted overall "*Library Corporations and Cooperative models are more efficient than standalone Council Libraries*". This is considered a governance and procedural project and will not impact on service delivery to the community. In fact, this project is essential to ensure that the organisation can continue to deliver excellent services to the community for the long-term future.

Planning and accountability framework

The Strategic Resource Plan (next four years) and Long-Term Financial Plan (next ten years) are part of and prepared in conjunction with the Library Plan, and are a rolling four to ten year plans that outline the financial and non-financial resources that West Gippsland Libraries requires to achieve the strategic objectives described in the Library Plan.

The Annual Budget is framed within the Strategic Resource Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan, taking into account the services and initiatives that contribute to achieving the strategic objectives specified in the Library Plan.

The timing of each component of the planning framework is critical to the successful achievement of the planned outcomes. The Library Plan, including the Strategic Resource Plan, is required to be completed by 30 June each year. West Gippsland Libraries reviews its Strategic Resource Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan each year as part of the annual budget process.

Financial goals

It is important for West Gippsland Libraries to set financial goals to provide guidance and structure to the budget process and assist with maintaining consistent financial planning year on year. West Gippsland Libraries financial goals are to:

- Operate in a financially sustainable manner;
- Operate within the rate cap, with new initiatives that require funding above the rate cap being supported by well-developed and costed business cases;
- Minimise fluctuations in increments from year to year that affect the member Councils;



- Reinvest efficiency savings into strategies identified in the Library Plan and the Collection; and
- Provide transparency and accountability.

Rate cap

For the 2021.22 financial year the Minister for Local Government has set the rate cap at 1.5% (2% in 2020.21).

Budget development

The Budget has been developed from first principles. Key assumptions that have influenced the development of the budget are detailed below.

- The increase in base wage rate for employees under the Enterprise Agreement is directly linked to the rate cap set by the Minister for Local Government. There is a floor amount of 1.6% which is more than the rate cap set for 2021.22 of 1.5%. Bargaining will be taking place for the Enterprise Agreement for the next three-year agreement between March and June 2021. Long term sustainability of the organisation is dependent on wage increments not exceeding the rate cap. An increase of 1.6% applied to the base wage rate will provide a shortfall of not just 0.1% to the base rate, but also a gap to wages oncosts, which is why the increments are 87% of the rate cap. Further in 2021.22, employees will receive an increase of 0.5% to their annual superannuation entitlement, putting further pressure on employee costs expenditure. The annual budget for 2021.22 is based on the existing 87% of the rate cap equalling 1.31% (1.74% in 2020.21). The Strategic Resources Plan (SRP) and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) assumes that subsequent years will see a 2% increment in the rate cap and thus provides for a 1.74% increment in wages.
- The superannuation guarantee increases in 2021.22 from 9.5% to 10% and will continue to increase by 0.5% for the next four years. This has been included in the SRP and LTFP. This equates to an additional \$20,000 per year for the next four years.
- Materials and services costs continue to be reviewed each year based on changes to systems, new contract arrangements and past expenditure trends. Efficiency reductions have been incorporated as well as allowing for inflation of 5% based on historical trends. There has been specific consulting expenditure included for 2021.22 to complete the legal entity major project.
- The budget provides for an increase in the collection of \$40,000 to ensure West Gippsland Libraries continues to provide a collection that is under five years old as identified in the Local Government Performance Reporting Indicators. Investment in e-resources will be increased to support their exponential utilisation by patrons. Available cash to invest in the collection is dependent on ongoing recurring savings elsewhere in the annual operating budget. The LTFP does show a decline in the collection investment in future years due to additional pressure from recurring expenditure. This will continue to be a focus for the organisation.
- Renewal of furniture and equipment has been included in the financial statements to work towards modernising branch libraries.
- The organisation has seen a significant decline during 2020 and 2021 in its other income. This includes revenue from printing and copying, fundraising contributions and donations and other miscellaneous grants. WGL has taken a conservative approach to providing for revenue in these areas for 2021.22 due to the uncertain economic climate.
- An increase in Council contributions consistent with the rate cap of 1.5%.
- An increase in recurring operating grants from the State Government of 1.5%. The existing funding agreement expires on 30 June 2021 and the sector is advocating for ongoing increments in line with population growth and CPI. There is currently no certainty that increments to the recurring grants will continue beyond 30 June 2021.
- The LTFP is a vital tool to inform strategic decision making for the organisation. It highlights the future implications of decisions made in the present and the recurring impacts to the financial sustainability long term. Highlighting such implications is an important mechanism to avoid decisions that erode the long-term viability of the organisation.



Policy and legislative implications

The Budget 2021.22 is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

- Section 196 – Regional libraries
- Section 127 – Council must prepare a budget
- Section 129 – Public notice
- Section 130 – Adoption of budget or revised budget
- Section 223 – Right to make a submission

Conclusion

There is a continued focus on the long-term financial sustainability when preparing annual budgets to ensure that decisions made now do not adversely affect how the service is delivered in the future. There are financial constraints in the 2021.22 financial year and in particular the rate cap of 1.5% that are considered. Despite these constraints West Gippsland Libraries is committed to a quality service and meeting the needs of members and this budget delivers on that commitment.

It is recommended that the board adopt the Draft Annual Budget 2021.22.

Conflict of interest

Under section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the CEO declares that there is no conflict of interest to disclose in providing this report.

Attachments

Attachment 8.2.1 – Draft Budget 2021.22



8.3 Quarter 2 Finance and Performance Report – 31 December 2020

Report Prepared by Chief Executive Officer

Executive Summary

This report presents to the Board the Quarterly Finance and Performance Report for the quarter ending 31 December 2020. This report highlights how West Gippsland Libraries has delivered on its actions in the Library Plan and performed against budget for the quarter.

Quarter two has ended with libraries being open yet continuing to fluctuate due to coronavirus circuit breaker lockdowns. West Gippsland Libraries continues to be well positioned to support the community and staff during the pandemic, including:

- Outdoor programming resuming.
- Libraries open with restricted numbers and hours.
- Live online chat function.
- Video services including:
 - Online story times.
 - How to videos.
 - Kids activity videos; and
 - Adult book reviews and recommendations.
- Tech talks with staff over the phone.
- Increased investment in e-resource collection; and
- Caring calls to patrons.

Recommendation

That the Board adopts the Quarter 2 Finance and Performance Report, for the quarter ending 31 December 2020.

Resolution

That the Board adopts the Quarter 2 Finance and Performance Report, for the quarter ending 31 December 2020.

Moved: Cr. Annemarie McCabe

Seconded: David Welch

Carried unanimously

Background

West Gippsland Libraries continues to deliver on its four-year strategic plan. It consists of eight key strategies with actions for each strategy. The Library Plan provides greater detail regarding these actions.

West Gippsland Libraries reports quarterly on its performance against budget and progress of actions pertaining to delivery of the strategies in the Library Plan and Annual Budget. The eight strategies are:

Strategy One – Enhance our library service models to better meet the needs of our community.

Strategy Two – Enable and facilitate new learning opportunities lead by the community.

Strategy Three – Improve our engagement with early years and teen members.

Strategy Four – Experiment with new and renovated spaces that reflect modern learning approaches.

Strategy Five – Test alternative engagement approaches to promote true inclusivity and accessibility.



Strategy Six – Support our community to explore and learn about new and emerging trends.

Strategy Seven – Promote a culture that encourages flexibility, experimentation, and personal growth.

Strategy Eight – Explore diverse revenue opportunities to complement our service.

Financial implications

The financial implications are outlined in the attached Quarterly Finance and Performance Report.

In its Annual Budget, West Gippsland Libraries has set financial goals to provide guidance and structure to the budget process and assist with maintaining consistent financial planning year on year. West Gippsland Libraries financial goals are to:

- Operate in a financially sustainable manner.
- Operate within the rate cap, with new initiatives that require funding above the rate cap being supported by well-developed and costed business cases.
- Minimise fluctuations in increments from year to year that affect the member Councils.
- Reinvest efficiency savings into strategies identified in the Library Plan and the Collection; and
- Provide transparency and accountability.

Policy and legislative implications

The finance report contained within the Quarterly Report is prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

Section 196 – Regional libraries

Section 136 – Principles of sound financial management

Section 138 – Quarterly statements

The Library Plan is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act) and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*. Whilst the quarterly report is not a specific requirement of the Act, the Board has elected to continue to report to the community on its progress during the year.

Conclusion

West Gippsland Libraries has continued to support patrons and staff during the pandemic. Online programming delivered by the WGL is by far a standout across the State and continues to be a focus as effects of the pandemic continue. It is pleasing to see members returning to the library and an ongoing focus will be on increasing memberships and visitation.

Conflict of interest

Under section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the CEO declares that there is no conflict of interest to disclose in providing this report.

Attachments

Attachment 8.3.1 – Quarter 2 Finance and Performance Report 2020.21



8.4 Board Meeting Timetable 2021

Report Prepared by Chief Executive Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to make minor changes to the Board meeting dates scheduled in 2021.

The meeting date originally scheduled for the April 2021 Ordinary Meeting is Friday 2nd April 2021, however this is Good Friday. Currently there are no agenda items scheduled for the April Ordinary meeting, so it is recommended that the board cancel this meeting date.

It is also requested that a change be made to the September 2021 Ordinary meeting date to accommodate the Board Chair's in person attendance and give consideration to the South Gippsland Shire Council elections that are scheduled for October 2021. It is recommended to change the September 2021 meeting date to Friday 3rd September 2021 to avoid the caretaker period.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- a) Cancel the Ordinary Board Meeting scheduled for Friday 2nd April 2021 due to Good Friday; and
- b) Change the date of the Ordinary Board meeting from Friday 10th September 2021 to Friday 3rd September 2021 with the location of the meeting to be determined closer to the date.

Resolution

That the Board:

- a) Cancel the Ordinary Board Meeting scheduled for Friday 2nd April 2021 due to Good Friday; and
- b) Change the date of the Ordinary Board meeting from Friday 10th September 2021 to Friday 3rd September 2021 with the location of the meeting to be determined closer to the date.

Moved: Cr. Annemarie McCabe

Seconded: Cr. Leticia Laing

Carried unanimously

Policy and legislative implications

Section 83(a) – Types of meetings (*Local Government Act 1989*)

Conflict of interest

Under section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the CEO declares that there is no conflict of interest to disclose in providing this report.

Attachments

Nil



9. Presentations

Nil

10. General Business

Nil

11. For information

Nil

12. Next Meeting

Ordinary Board meeting Friday 7th May 2021 at San Remo Library, at 11.30 am.

Meeting Closed at 12.57pm

