

Fact Sheet

Municipal Monitor: Frequently asked questions

Strathbogie Shire Council has announced the appointment of Municipal Monitor Janet Dore to help guide the team in coming months.

We hope the following frequently asked questions provide our community with further information.

Why has a Municipal Monitor been appointed?

We are essentially a team of first-time Councillors who are asking for an extra layer of education and advice in our unwavering pursuit of good governance.

We have a new incoming Councillor in a couple of weeks for the Lake Nagambie Ward and we will also have a new Mayor elected in November.

We are keen for our community to see this as leadership. The monitor has not been enforced on Council, we have asked for an expert to provide us with dedicated and tailored guidance to help Council work their way through their responsibilities under a new Local Government Act, which is proving to be a challenge for all councils across Victoria.

Who is the Municipal Monitor?

Originally a town planner, Janet Dore had a successful career in senior management in local government and government agencies.

She led the City of Ballarat as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Newcastle City Council as General Manager and more recently was CEO of the TAC based in Geelong.

Ms Dore has also held board-level roles with NIB, Newcastle Airport, NSW Heritage Council, NSW Sustainability Advisory Council and the Victorian Planning Appeals Tribunal.

How long will the monitor be in place?

Ms Dore will start with Council on September 14, 2021. Initially working one to two days a week for a three-month period, with the potential for this to be extended for up to six months.

How much will it cost and how is it being funded?

The cost of the Municipal Monitor will be covered by Council and we estimate it will be between \$20,000 to \$30,000. This will be entirely covered by the existing budget allocated to governance.

Were all councillors aware and were they supportive?

Yes, Councillors were absolutely informed and are supportive of further training, education and support.

Concerns have been robustly debated about the cost, but we are using funding from within our existing governance budget and have not requested any additional funding from Council.

Did Councillors receive adequate training during their induction program?

The Councillor induction program ran for five months, with several hours of each Tuesday dedicated to the induction. This was the most extensive induction program ever delivered at Strathbogrie Shire Council and was tailored to cater for the needs of six new incoming councillors with no previous experience on Council or Committees of Council.

This training was delivered by our Executive Team and other officers, external experts in the governance, planning and gender equity fields, along with meetings with groups such as the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance.

An induction manual, Councillor portal and copies of the presentations delivered to the Councillors all form a resource for the Councillors on an ongoing basis.

Has there been examples of poor governance raised to have a municipal monitor appointed?

This monitor was not enforced on Council, we have asked for an expert to provide us with guidance.

As outlined in our Councillor Code of Conduct, any allegations around breaches of the Code are to be kept confidential and dealt with in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures outlined in the Code.

Being a Councillor is a demanding and complex job, particularly under the new Local Government Act 2020.

We want to ensure we are doing the absolute best for our community. We love Strathbogrie Shire and we want them to have full, transparent confidence that we are always doing the best for them.

This very public monitor will ensure our community can trust the advice of an independent expert.

For more information visit our website at www.strathbogrie.vic.gov.au. Here you will find:

- Media release: A guiding hand for Council
- Statement from the Mayor