

# Help shape the future of Strathbogie Shire

During the next nine months Council will be calling on you – our community – to share your thoughts, feedback and advice to help us develop a Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan.

We can't do it alone!

These important documents guide the work of Council, so it is essential we develop them together.

We want Council and our community to share the same vision.

We want to move towards a better future together.

As a Council we're only successful if we're meeting our community needs, so we're asking you to share your vision for the future and help set our focus to get there.

There will be several stages to the community engagement program and many opportunities for you to have a say.

We're kicking it off with a series of face-to-face sessions we're calling **Share Strathbogie**.



## my strathbogie bulletin

**February 2021**

Picture: Riversmith

We'll be hitting the streets, heading to townships throughout the Shire to ask you:

- What do you love about living in Strathbogie Shire?
- What would make it an even better place to live in the future
- What might you be able to live without?

For Council balancing service levels with liveability and cost is always a challenge.

However, a sustainable financial future for Strathbogie Shire is non-negotiable. The first **Share Strathbogie** drop-in session was held in Strathbogie on Tuesday, February 23.

The next will be held on Saturday, March 6 at the Nagambie Lakeside Community Market.

**Cr Chris Raeburn**

Strathbogie Shire Mayor

*The table below shows dates and times for all Share Strathbogie drop-in days.*

Date	Township	Venue	Time
<b>Tuesday, February 23</b>	Strathbogie	Strathbogie Community Hall	4pm to 6pm
<b>Saturday, March 6</b>	Nagambie	Nagambie Lakeside Community Market	9am to 1pm
<b>Saturday, March 13</b>	Avenel	Avenel Community Market	4.30pm to 8pm
<b>Saturday, March 20</b>	Euroa	Euroa Farmers' Market	9am to 1pm
<b>Wednesday, March 21</b>	Longwood	Longwood Recreation Reserve	4pm to 6pm
<b>Friday, March 26</b>	Violet Town	Violet Town Community Centre	1pm to 5pm
<b>Wednesday, March 31</b>	Ruffy	Tablelands Community Centre	4pm to 6pm

# Your new Council

Strathbogie Shire's new Council has hit the ground running.

We're excited to introduce you to the new team and thought we'd use the Bulletin to share some information on our new Councillor's history, along with their aspirations on Council.



## Cr Laura Binks Mount Wombat ward

**Cr Binks offers up a vibrant voice for our community's future**

Councillor Laura Binks put up her hand for the 2020 Strathbogie Shire Council election because she wanted to "bring a vibrant voice to the table".

Her working career, varied personal interests and "deep connection to the community" indicate this voice will be progressive and inclusive of our population's diversity.

At 38, Cr Binks brings broad experience to the table: a graduate of architecture; hands-on professional in building design and construction; artist; environmentalist; small-scale farmer; long-time volunteer; and committed listener and communicator.

Cr Binks grew up on the family farm on Harry's Creek Road at the foothills of the Strathbogie Ranges.

Community involvement started early when her father, Peter, was Violet Town Community Market coordinator, and young Laura volunteered on the Violet Town Primary School stall.

"The market has always been a huge part of my life," Cr Binks, a Violet Town Community Pizza Oven stall volunteer, said.

Even while studying architecture and later, fine arts, and commuting to previous jobs in Melbourne, Cr Binks maintained a connection to the market and other community projects, mostly volunteering her creative design skills.

"I just love it here and relocated back here (full-time) in 2016 when I became self-employed," Cr Binks said.

Her homecoming provided the opportunity to "take a deeper dive into local issues" by joining the Save Our Strathbogie Forest group. She also immersed herself in Strathbogie community's arts group, Bogarts.

"I stood for council because I want to help create a financially, socially and environmentally sustainable shire," Cr Binks said.

"I had considered running for council a few times in the past, but the time was never right. While participating in the 2020 Fairley Leadership Program, I gained the confidence to become a community leader."

Numerous conversations within her community also inspired Cr Binks to nominate for the Strathbogie Shire Council election.

"Having support from members of the community who believed in me, definitely helped me to decide," she said.

Cr Binks is loving the inevitable learning curve of a first-term councillor and the community engagement aspect of her role.

"There is a lot to learn which I anticipated, however it is so rewarding being able to help solve the diverse inquiries and issues the community contacts us about," she said.

**"I enjoy being the connector between the queries and the answer."**

During the election campaign, Cr Binks pledged: "I know we need better communication between ratepayers and council, including Councillors. I am committed to transparency and accountability."

Now, as a working Councillor, she remains committed to that promise. "If people ask me what I'd like to achieve by the end of my term, my answer is: 'A productive and prosperous working relationship between the community and council.'

"I believe we have a great opportunity to be leaders in sustainable farming, business, art and tourism sectors here in the Strathbogie Shire.

"We have many creative and bold business owners, farmers and thinkers in our region. I want to create a shire that works with these people and supports them to create a region that has inspiring long-term goals that secure the future of this area for generations to come."



## Cr Reg Dickinson

### Lake Nagambie ward

Promoting men's health, local environment priority for Cr Reg Dickinson

An opportunity to promote men's health while working to protect the local environment are key drivers behind Cr Reg Dickinson's decision to nominate for Strathbogie Council.

The first-time Councillor said his decision to run was "now or never", one he hopes will fulfill a growing desire to take a stand on local issues, in particular men's health.

Each year, the first-time Councillor grows out his moustache to do just that while raising funds for his local Nagambie hospital. Cr Dickinson said because he lives in a regional area, which boasts a large agriculture industry, he is acutely aware about the importance of ensuring men can access health-support networks locally.

"One thing I've been involved with right from the beginning is a men's health group. We hung on the coat-tails of 'Movember' when quite a few of us grew moustaches to raise money. It's a bit of a hobbyhorse of mine," Cr Dickinson said.

"While our efforts have been put on hold due to coronavirus (COVID-19), we generally hold a few functions throughout the year to raise money."

**"I'm also very passionate about anything to do with the environment, including climate change."**

I'm a supporter of progress in Strathbogie Shire, as long as it's done responsibly. We don't have to jump in and welcome all those developers with open arms."

Another catalyst for Cr Dickinson was a need to be more active in his community.

"I was an objector against a removal of over 50 trees, which actually swung my thought process. I thought someone has got to stand up and be counted, and now it feels like it's my turn to do just that," Cr Dickinson said.

Outside of working for his community, Cr Dickinson enjoys many social outlets, including the odd spot of lawn bowls.

"I'm an avid bowler and involved with the Nagambie Bowls Club, the RSL here and the local 'tow 'n' yarn' club (i.e. caravan club). We go away for a week here and there in small groups. I'm also a member of the senior citizens' club and I'm very community minded," Cr Dickinson said.

Cr Dickinson said he can't wait to see what this Council can achieve

"We've got a very fresh Council, so it will be a bit of a learning curve. But there is a good feeling among us and I feel that we're really well supported by staff. We're all pretty keen to do well."

"I'm excited and looking forward to the challenges in front of me. I didn't know any of the candidates when I nominated, including Melanie (Cr Likos; fellow Lake Nagambie ward Councillor), but I'm really keen to work closely with them."



## Cr Sally Hayes-Burke

### Seven Creeks ward

Vision for changing demographic for this Councillor

As the mother of a toddler and baby, Sally Hayes-Burke could have chosen to lay low during the 2020 council elections.

But, despite the sleep-deprived existence of early parenthood, the qualified lawyer felt compelled to throw her hat into the ring of local government.

"I am passionate about the community, keen to help and I love learning," the newly elected Seven Creeks Ward Councillor said.

"I didn't want to be one of those people who had an opportunity to make a difference but did nothing, and then complain about things not getting done."

Cr Hayes-Burke grew up in Euroa and Longwood before living in Shepparton throughout high school. She completed her arts degree at Melbourne

University, and undertook her postgraduate studies in law while working for seven years as assistant to the vice-chancellor.

Seeking a country lifestyle for their family, Cr Hayes-Burke and husband Simon moved to Euroa two years ago when their first child was six months old.

She completed her trainee year at a local firm before becoming a stay-at-home mum on the arrival of their second child.

At 33, Cr Hayes-Burke is the youngest member of the shire's new-look council. Her daughters Frankie and Roma were aged two and five-months respectively when Cr Hayes-Burke was elected in October 2020.

"When the opportunity to run for council came up, Roma was three months old and was not sleeping through!" Cr Hayes Burke said.

"Having children has made me realise I want to make a better future for them. I'm sure they will understand my small contribution to try to make a better world for them."

With an influx of young families in the region, Cr Hayes-Burke wants to see the changing demographic reflected in the council budget.

**"I'm passionate about child and maternal health: a child that thrives helps our society to thrive," she said.**

While committed to a more liveable future for youth and young families in Strathbogie Shire, Cr Hayes-Burke is equally dedicated to the voices and needs of residents of all ages and backgrounds.

"I'd like council to be inclusive of all people living in, and moving to, our shire. I'd like to see a more diverse range of views visited and heard," she said.

"I want to see real community engagement; my vision for the future is to be a lot more focused on the community needs, rather than delivering from the top and telling the community what it needs."

Cr Hayes-Burke's vision includes informing the community more about how the rating system works.

"If people have genuine involvement in what the council delivers, they will feel like they are getting better value in their rates," she said.

Cr Hayes-Burke also wants to establish a Memorandum of Understanding with the Taungurung people and is an advocate for climate action.

Often seen cycling in the township of Euroa, her vision is to improve the connectivity between the shire's towns and create infrastructure which encourages residents to keep active by walking and riding.

With much community engagement, decision-making, and learning ahead, Cr Hayes-Burke is grateful to the support networks helping her prepare for a productive term on council.

"The executive team have been very supportive of the new councillors, and I am grateful for that," Cr Hayes-Burke said.

"I'm also lucky to have the support of my parents in Euroa and my husband, to help manage life with a young family."



### Kristy Hourigan Seven Creeks ward

A road trip to progress drives Cr Hourigan

When Kristy Hourigan and her young family pulled into Euroa on an Australian-wide road trip in 2017, an unexpected future was sealed.

They found a rundown caravan park with bad reviews in one of the most picturesque spots in town; and saw its potential.

When they discovered it was listed for sale, the decision was easy to leave behind their Frankston home. Kristy and partner Warrick set about breathing new life into the tired park, nestled alongside Sevens Creek at the foothills of the Strathbogie Ranges.

They did not foresee that within four years the park's patronage would be tripled, nor that Kristy –when their daughters were 2 and 7 – would be elected as one of the two Seven Creeks Ward Councillors.

The family stumbled across Euroa during their 10-month caravanning holiday.

"It looked like a nice little town and the park needed some loving," Cr Hourigan said.

"The idea of buying a caravan park had evolved as we were tripping around Australia; we saw potential in Euroa, which was also close to our family in Melbourne."

As new owners, the couple upgraded cabins and developed the gardens, creating a haven for holidaymakers alongside Sevens Creek within walking distance to town.

"We helped increase tourism by cleaning up the park and promoting local businesses through vouchers we were giving out. We did lots of marketing and promotions," Cr Hourigan said.

With a corporate background, Cr Hourigan was accustomed to seeing opportunities and pushing for progress, so her interest was piqued when nominations opened for the Strathbogie Shire Council elections in 2020.

"I was sick of complaining about the town not going anywhere," Cr Hourigan said.

"I thought I have two options: one I get involved in the area's progress, or two, I keep complaining."

Cr Hourigan said she is committed to progress, accountability, and action.

**"I want to help things move faster, and smarter; I nominated because I want to help make change," she said.**

"I want to see the shire progress, and I want to be a part of that change."

Broadly, Cr Hourigan has a vision for each unique area of the shire.

"I want to see Euroa become more family friendly with the development of a playground and BMX track," she said.

**"I want Strathbogie to embrace what it is already good at. For example, Strathbogie is so popular for cycling, motorbikes, 4WDs and campsites."**

She wants to see continued progress and development throughout the rest of the shire also, which will be underpinned by "adequate planning with developers".

As a former adult trainer and assessor in the areas of human resources, management, business and retail, Cr Hourigan has a varied skill base which she believes stands her in good stead for the huge learning curve of Local Government.

While settling into her council role during the upheaval of COVID-19, Cr Hourigan is increasingly inspired by her community.

"I have learnt I live in an absolutely beautiful community, and I feel so extremely supported by people," she said.

"I love that I live in a community where people feel so relaxed to approach me to discuss their concerns or ideas."



### Cr Paul Murray Hughes Creek Ward

**COVID-19 recovery, youth welfare behind Cr Murray's nomination**

Before nominating, first-time Councillor Paul Murray was involved in local education for so long that he not only taught the children of former students, but their grandchildren, too.

"When I think about it, that was the point when I knew it was time to retire," Cr Murray joked, he had taught at Euroa Secondary College for an amazing 35 years.

Though, that passion for his community and local youth remains and is behind his drive to stand for Strathbogie Council.

In addition, Cr Murray continues to be involved in many grassroots groups, including assisting with the Euroa Men's Shed, Euroa Hockey Club as President, and with the local croquet club and historical society.

After previously thinking about running for Council, Cr Murray finally decided term 2020-24 was right for him.

"I guess I'd been thinking about running for some time. I thought about it four years ago and decided against, but I'm recently retired and I thought I'd have a go," Cr Murray said.

"I've been involved with the community in lots of different ways for some years. I decided I would like to keep my involvement with the community going. I was successful and very pleased.

"Through my community work and teaching, I think I have developed many important relationships and connections. I now want to represent them to the best of my ability."

Cr Murray represents Hughes Creek ward, which takes in his hometown of Longwood. With many passions and causes close to his heart, Cr Murray said he can't wait to hit the ground running.

**"Certainly youth development and welfare are very important to me. But, as well as that, the post-COVID recovery is something I want to help with; that is economic and social recovery."**

"I'm also passionate about equitable distribution of services within the Shire. Smaller communities such as Avenel and Longwood are in my ward and I want to see they don't miss out."

Aside from his community work, Cr Murray is married with three adult children.

"We love living in the region and my children have all grown up here. Two of my children have moved back to the area and now work here. I believe there's a great reason people stick around, because of the people and the welcoming townships."



## Cr Melanie Likos

### Lake Nagambie ward

**Resilience and life experiences boosts Cr Likos**

If life experience counts when sitting on Strathbogie Shire Council, we can expect some exciting contributions from Cr Melanie Likos.

Newly elected to the Lake Nagambie ward for the 2020-24 term, Cr Likos brings leadership gained from working as an emergency nurse locally, internationally and in remote communities throughout Australia. Also throughout her life, she has from time-to-time taken on the role of foster carer for vulnerable children.

Due to her background, which includes presently operating a local bus-tour company, she has developed a passion for economic development and supporting the wellbeing of our youth.

Cr Likos is one of six new faces elected to Council. The first-time Councillor was voted unanimously as Deputy to new Mayor, Cr Chris Raeburn.

"I grew up in this region and love seeing it succeed and flourish. In particular, I'm really passionate about youth, creating opportunities for youth and supporting their mental health – particularly given the challenges they've faced during the pandemic," Cr Likos said.

"Sitting on Council is a great way for me to make a difference. I'm so grateful for the passionate support I've received from the community and I look forward to representing them in the Council chambers. With so many new Councillors joining us, and with an experienced Mayor in Chris Raeburn, I'm super excited about what we can achieve."

Cr Likos said she was drawn to nominating when expanding on her leadership skills.

"I had been completing the Fairley Leadership Program in Shepparton last year when it was suggested I should run for Council," Cr Likos said.

**"There is so much to love about this region and I hope to support all we have to offer.**

Previously, I've sat on local chambers of commerce and have the experience to deliver economic progress and prosperity for Strathbogie Shire.

"One project I'm keen to see advance is the Foreshore Walk project at Lake Nagambie. The connection that will create for the Regatta Centre and the town would deliver a real boost for the region. That would be incredible to see.

"But I'm keen to support many initiatives that support our tourism industry and business, and anything that benefits our youth."

Cr Likos' perspective on community-based issues are as well-earned as they are profound, given she spent five years fighting back from significant injuries. While spectating at the Southern 80 water-ski race in 2009, a race boat lost control and struck her.

"During the Black Saturday bushfires, my life turned upside down. Within hours of losing my house in the fires, I was standing on a houseboat and watching the race when the boat struck me," Cr Likos said.

"I was left with seven broken ribs, a punctured lung and my liver was split in half. I was airlifted to hospital and I spent the next two years having surgeries. It was five years before I could return to work."

Presently, Cr Likos is writing an autobiography on her life experiences, which includes the accident, and she hopes to publish within the next 12 months.

Though, her focus is directed towards representing her community and beloved Strathbogie Shire to the best of her ability.

"I grew up in this region; I was educated near here and this is my home. I care about the people of this community and I want to see them enjoy all that is amazing about living in this beautiful part of Australia."



## Mayor Cr Chris Raeburn

**Honeysuckle Creek ward**

**Community empowerment front of mind for Mayor**

In a Strathbogie Council full of fresh faces, newly elected Mayor, Cr Chris Raeburn, provides a welcome balance to the chambers through his wealth of experience.

A former Mayor of the City of Port Melbourne (now City of Port Phillip) in 1990-91 and 1991-92, Cr Raeburn prides himself on engaging with and empowering the community for which he tirelessly works. Cr Raeburn is the only returning Councillor for the new term, after last year winning a by-election following the retirement of a sitting Councillor.

Cr Raeburn has quickly become a favourite in his home town of Violet Town, since he relocated there with his partner, Becc, just over three years ago.

Here, he has immersed himself in community life through involvements with the Violet Town Football/Netball Club and the Violet Town Action Group.

**Now, he continues his message of community-first during his role as Mayor.**

"I'm not going on Council with any particular issue in mind. My issue is listening to the community and finding ways to empower and improve their lives," Cr Raeburn said.

"I'm here on this Council to interact and engage. I want the community to set the agenda, because working together means delivering what they need. Better decisions are made together."

Cr Raeburn was elected to lead Strathbogie Council at the Statutory meeting on Tuesday, 17 November, 2020. He said it wasn't hard to commit to Strathbogie Shire, its residents and the many dedicated community groups.

"After travelling and working around Australia, we were looking for somewhere to live in Victoria. I felt the countryside in Echuca was too flat, but we loved the landscapes around here. We eventually settled on Violet Town, where we have been living for three years," Cr Raeburn said.

"I chose to become involved in the community, helping out at the local market, football-netball club and eventually joined the Violet Town Action Group. During this time, someone suggested I would be a good fit for Council and I should run. I joined Council in March (2020) and I'm thoroughly enjoying it."

In his professional life, Cr Raeburn boasts an extensive background within the Victorian railway industry, where he started as a casual labourer and worked his way to numerous senior positions.

"I left Melbourne for Echuca in 2005, where I worked at the Moama RSL. For a time, I also worked with people living with a disability, then as a teacher's aide at a special school in Echuca. I really loved that, and it was one of the most rewarding jobs I've had," Cr Raeburn said.

"My partner then decided it was time for us to travel around Australia. We left to travel for 12 months and didn't come back for six years! During that time, I worked in hospitality and retail around Australia, and, as a gardener and care-taker on cattle-stations."

Cr Raeburn said he is honoured to have been elected mayor and is looking forward to working closely with the community and incoming Councillors.

# Working for Victoria team success

When COVID-19 locked us down last year and took away many jobs from members of our community the Victorian Government offered a program to all Victorian Councils.

It was the opportunity to engage residents for six months to carry out duties to enhance output and assist current staff.

Strathbogie Shire was given funding to employ 43 contracted staff for six months to assist and augment works or planned works for that period of time.

You may have noticed our outdoor staff carrying out many extra activities including painting at the saleyards in Euroa. They also revitalised many of the community gardens and planted natives in the lake wall at Nagambie.

The team landscaped areas around Kirwan's Bridge and the Avenel skate park and deep cleaned all the community halls and installed safety bollards.

The Communication team had the chance to develop a greater emphasis on social media providing more Facebook entries as well as developing a feel-good website called 'The Strathbogie Story' which highlighted some of our residents and how they were coping and operating under a strict COVID lockdown.

Maybe you saw the postcards which were also developed so that people could keep in touch with relatives and friends saying from our Shire to your Shire.

The IT team gained a 'trouble shooter' with extensive experience and other departments gained administration staff that bought different skills sets and knowledge that improved our working processes.

Almost all of our contracted employees under the Working for Victoria banner have completed their assignments now and have left us for new employment.

However, their work enhanced the RE3 program which was to Reset Reboot and Revitalise the Shire, giving a real shot in the arm to staff with their new ideas and quick learning's of our council business.

THE  
*Strathbogie*  
STORY

## Euroa Community Cinema

February/March Movie Sessions: Tickets \$10

### PENGUIN BLOOM Feb 27, 8pm; Feb 28, 4pm

PG | 1hr 35min | Drama. Penguin Bloom tells the true story of Sam Bloom, a young mother whose world is turned upside down after a near-fatal accident leaves her unable to walk.

### CORPUS CHRISTI March 5, 8pm; March 6, 4pm

MA15+ | 1hr 55min | Drama. Inspired by true events, Jan Komasa's Academy Award-nominated drama is a remarkable tale of morality and redemption, about a young ex-con who falsely posted as a priest.  
\*This film is Polish and has English subtitles throughout.

### HIGH GROUND March 6, 8pm; March 7, 4pm

MA15+ | 1hr 44min | Action, Thriller. In a bid to save the last of his family, Gutjuk, a young Aboriginal man, teams up with ex-soldier Travis to track down Baywara, the most dangerous warrior in the Territory, his uncle.

### WILD MOUNTAIN THYME March 13, 8pm, March 14, 4pm

PG, 102 minutes, Drama, Romance. The headstrong farmer Rosemary Muldoon (Emily Blunt) has her heart set on winning her neighbour Anthony Reilly's love. The problem is Anthony (Jamie Dornan) seems to have inherited a family curse, and remains oblivious to his beautiful admirer.

## Markets are Back!

### AVENEL CRAFT AND PRODUCE MARKET

When: Second Sunday of the month  
Where: Jubilee Park, Avenel Time: 9am to 1pm

### EUROA VILLAGE FARMERS' MARKET

When: Third Saturday of the month  
Where: Rotary Park Time: 9am to 1pm

### NAGAMBIE FARMERS' MARKET

When: Fourth Sunday of the month  
Where: Tahbilk Winery Time: 10am to 2pm

### NAGAMBIE LAKES COMMUNITY MARKET

When: First Saturday of the month  
Where: Jacobson's outlook, High St, Nagambie Time: 9am to 1pm

### VIOLET TOWN COMMUNITY MARKET

When: Second Saturday of the month  
Where: Recreation Reserve Time: 8.30am to 1pm

Follow **@WhatsonStrathbogie** on Facebook or download the latest monthly flyer on our website strathbogie.vic.gov.au to keep up to date with events, markets and activities happening in the Strathbogie Shire.

# News in Brief

## More volunteers needed at Nagambie Visitor Information Centre



Anthea Good loves volunteering at Nagambie Visitor Information Centre and encourages more volunteers to join the roster.

When Anthea Good moved to Nagambie from the Dandenong Ranges seven years ago she did not know anyone, nor much about the area.

These days the five-year volunteer at Nagambie Visitor Information Centre, has a wealth of knowledge to share with tourists, and despite not growing up in the area, "feels like a local".

"I love volunteering here. It's definitely one of my favourite things to do," Ms Good, 45, said.

**"I would encourage anybody with an interest in the area and meeting new people to volunteer."**

Strathbogie Shire Council has urged long-term and new residents to join the team at the Visitor Information Centre on the Lake Nagambie foreshore.

Mayor Chris Raeburn said more volunteers were needed to cater for increased visitation to the region since the easing of Victoria's COVID-19 restrictions.

"Whether you are a newcomer to Nagambie or a long-time local, you have a lot to offer by volunteering at the Nagambie Visitor Information Centre," Cr Raeburn said.

"Volunteering is a great way to learn about the area, share your knowledge with visitors, and help our shire's economy to recover and thrive after the challenges of Victoria's lockdowns in 2020."

Cr Raeburn said volunteers could choose to work as little as one morning a month or a whole day at the weekend, and new helpers were supported by experienced volunteers and Council staff.

The fully accredited Visitor Information Centre is at 293 High St, on the Lake Nagambie foreshore.

If you are interested in volunteering at Nagambie Visitor Information Centre, email **Strathbogie Shire Council** on [info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au) or phone 1800 065 993.

## Major projects ticked off

We are proud to say that several major projects have been completed in January.

To support the self contained travellers who visit our area in caravans, motor homes and recreation vehicles we have installed two dump points for the removal of black and grey water and waste.

These new dump points are in Nagambie and Violet Town and we welcome the many travellers who are discovering the many joys of our great Shire.

New dedicated Tracks and Trails have been completed in Ruffy and Avenel to enable people to discover these towns on foot.

In Violet Town the Harrys Creek culvert has been replaced. This was a major work and is very positive for future rain events.

## Business support funding

Council has provided Go Nagambie and Euroa Chamber of Business and Commerce with \$30,000 each to help businesses that have struggled as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and to provide professional services to support their recovery.

It will also be used to provide free membership for 12 months to all registered businesses in the Shire and their surrounding localities.

Strathbogie Shire Mayor Cr Chris Raeburn said this will allow these businesses to seek support and assistance from within their own business community and to encourage business owners to network within their own areas.

Go Nagambie's funding will be used through businesses in the Nagambie, Avenel, Mitcheltown and Graytown areas.

The Euroa Chamber's funding will be shared across Euroa, Longwood, Strathbogie, Violet Town and Ruffy and surrounding area businesses.

We are committed to supporting our business community and the funding can also be used to plan events and attract customers to the region.

## High St speed limit

The speed limit in High St, Nagambie has returned to 40km/hr while the marquees in the Go Dine precinct close. When tourism and visitor activities again increase in March, and the Go Dine marquees reopen, traffic will again be reduced to 20km/hr along the 600m section of High St.

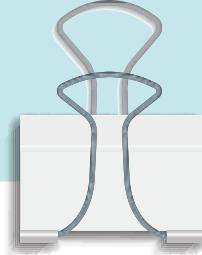
## Tree pruning works

We will be carrying out tree pruning around power lines in Avenel and Euroa from Friday, March 5. Pruning will continue for about one month (dependent on weather conditions). The pruning will be carried out as per Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 and our Electric Line Clearance Vegetation Management Plan 2020/21.

# Calls to ARTC for better community engagement

Strathbogie Shire Council is calling for better community engagement to decide the design of the Euroa Railway Precinct. We have written to the Australia Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) calling for them to take a step back in the decision process and go back to the community to decide the final solution.

Below is a copy of our letter to ARTC CEO Mark Campbell:



Thank you to David Donnelly and Andrew Cole for taking the time to meet with Council on January 28, 2021.

We appreciate your time, the extensive information you provided, and we look forward to continuing positive discussions.

We're writing today because we wanted to raise Council, and our community's concerns, about the process being used to decide the solution to the Euroa Railway Precinct.

To put it really simply - our community does not feel it has been part of the decision-making.

The Euroa community is loud and passionate. When it comes to the Euroa Railway Precinct it believes – and we agree – that the community must be involved in the solution.

We understand the community engagement has been significant, and we welcome the work you have done with the Euroa Working Group and through the pop-up shops in our main street.

However, as a Council we cannot ignore our community's concerns.

There is no doubt the future design of the Anderson St Bridge, the Euroa Railway Precinct and the movement of vehicles (rail and road) has a significant impact on our town's future.

Our vision for Euroa is a united community. One that is not divided by a railway line.

Good design creates inspired and connected communities.

To reiterate, the design of this project has significant impact.

We believe best practice engagement can ally Council and our community's fears.

What we are urging the ARTC to do is put our community at the heart of the decision-making process.

At our recent meeting the ARTC committed to broad community engagement to inform the development of the Urban Design Framework for the precinct. We thank you for this commitment.

We are now seeking a deliberate engagement process that will allow our community to reach a group decision on the future design of the Euroa Railway Precinct.

It will ensure our community is involved in a meaningful way.

When implemented well, deliberative engagement has huge benefits for all involved. Just a few of these are:

- **It increases participants knowledge, resulting in more informed and considered views;**
- **It builds trust between authorities and communities through greater transparency;**
- **It ensures open and honest discussion; and,**
- **It ensures the community is involved in the decision making.**

As a Council we know the thought of deliberative engagement is daunting.

To promise to implement what the community decides, or to incorporate the community's advice and recommendations to the maximum extent possible, can feel difficult or risky.

We believe people make good decisions when they are given the time, information and authority to decide.

We also know that we're asking you to take a step back in the process, which has already identified an overpass as the preferred solution.

However, our community has been clear about the need to again explore the design options.

More than this, we believe our community has the right to be involved in decisions that affect them.

*Cr Chris Raeburn*

Mayor | Strathbogie Shire Council

