



Grant funds flow for small business recovery

IN THIS ISSUE

- New beginning for Bracknell Hall**
- Highlights of Council's 2020-21 budget**
- Council set to review waste strategy**
- Making hard waste collection easier**
Important changes for 2020
- Community Car services**
- Ready for cricket season!**

 **BETTER ONLINE?**

To subscribe or read Council's Valley News online visit www.meander.tas.gov.au

Mayor's Message



Welcome to the first edition of Council's quarterly newsletter, Valley News. Copies are also available to download from Council's website where you can subscribe to have the latest editions delivered direct to your email inbox.

In recent months, the COVID-19 pandemic and declared state of emergency have been exceptionally challenging for everyone. Throughout this time, Council has had incredible support from a number of volunteer organisations, assisting us to manage the provision of transport, meals and other essential services to those most vulnerable. On behalf of the Meander Valley community and all Councillors, I thank you for your ongoing efforts.

The COVID-19 restrictions have significantly changed the way we work and relate to the community and, like many organisations, we are adapting to different ways of communicating with local residents and visitors.

Whilst print media is still preferred by some, there is a growing trend towards digital communication channels. Valley News is just one of a number of ways Council is working towards better engagement and consultation with the community over the coming months.

Meander Valley has outstanding opportunity and as we look towards 2021, we do so with an incredibly resilient community that I am proud to represent.

Mayor, Wayne Johnston

Your Councillors



Mayor Wayne Johnston

0417 316 208

wayne.johnston@mvc.tas.gov.au



Deputy Mayor Michael Kelly

0408 137 604

michael.kelly@mvc.tas.gov.au



Cr Stephanie Cameron

0419 894 383

stephanie.cameron@mvc.tas.gov.au



Cr Frank Nott

0417 225 526

frnott@bigpond.com



Cr Susie Bower

0427 311 400

susiebower@bigpond.com



Cr Rodney Synfield

0447 902 200

eaglerise2@gmail.com



Cr John Temple

0418 131 262

john.temple@mvc.tas.gov.au



Cr Tanya King

0409 452 642

tanya.king@mvc.tas.gov.au



Cr Andrew Sherriff

0473 506 810

andrew.sherriff@mvc.tas.gov.au

New beginning for Bracknell's Community Hall

Planning is underway to construct a new community hall in Bracknell as the existing structure is due for replacement.

"The old hall has had a noticeable lean for a number of years and a replacement building will best meet the needs of the community," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

The proposed new structure will be an extension to the existing Boys and Girls Club building and will follow the same profile. It will be designed to accommodate existing user groups and a range of community activities including indoor bowls, a community gym and health and wellbeing classes.

"Both Council and the Bracknell Hall Committee recognise the rich history associated with the old hall. A dedicated foyer featuring key artefacts and some of the original timber has been incorporated into the design," Mayor Johnston said.

The area around the building will also be considered, allowing for the future relocation of the playground and options for installing a remembrance memorial.

Council has included the project in this year's Capital Works Program and has sought additional funding from the Federal Government.

Council will be consulting with the community on the project and feedback will be used to refine the design prior to the commencement of any work.



Above: Merrilyn Shelton, Mandy Parker, Cr Bower, Council's General Manager John Jordan and Ian Mackenzie collaborate on plans for a new hall.

It's showtime at Meander Valley Performing Arts Centre



Above: Western Tiers Film Society members Deb White and Lyn Prove join Cr King in the new entrance hall to the Little Theatre.

One of Council's most diverse public spaces has had a face lift after the collaborative efforts of Council and the community.

"The facility's foyer area was dated and under-utilised. Reconfiguration and refurbishment has seen it transformed into a warm and inviting space," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Identified by former Meander Valley Councillor, Deb White in 2016, the project quickly gained support from the community, particularly regular users of the centre.

"Council, together with associated community groups have worked with an interior designer to improve energy efficiency, close off redundant entrances and maximise aesthetic appeal with dramatic effect.

"The wall timbers have been retained which is significant, as they were milled from an original tree onsite. The timber is now a feature in the foyer," Project Officer Kris Eade said.

The Meander Valley Performing Arts Centre is a multi-purpose venue used by the Western Tiers Film Society, the Deloraine Dramatic Society, fencing, table tennis, big band, skating, dancing and others.

"Council thanks and appreciates the efforts of the community groups who have helped to drive this project and contributed to its success," Mayor Johnston said.

Intersection safety improvements for Country Club Avenue, Prospect Vale

Work on the intersection of Country Club Avenue and Las Vegas Drive is well underway with the installation of a dedicated right turning lane, pedestrian refuge islands and upgraded access ramps.

The work has been undertaken in response to issues identified by members of the community and the Department of State Growth with consideration to future increases in traffic in the area.

"7,500 vehicles use Country Club Avenue every day and with future development that figure will increase," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

The project has been funded by direct contributions from Council and a grant from the Federal Government's Black Spot Programme.

The intersection upgrade is expected to be completed within a few weeks.



Above: Technical Officer Pete Jones, Cr Nott and Cr Bower check on the progress of work on Las Vegas Drive.

Room to move for Deloraine Squash Club



Above: Deloraine Squash Club members Patrick Sheehan and Cory Youd join Cr Sherriff at the proposed site of the new facility.

Deloraine Squash Club will have more room to move with planning underway on a proposed new facility.

As part of the Deloraine and Districts Recreation Precinct Feasibility Study, an opportunity was identified to relocate squash from within the Meander Valley Performing Arts Centre to the Alveston Drive precinct.

In consultation with the Deloraine Squash Club, plans include the construction of four new courts,

a viewing area, change rooms, office space and a club room.

"The development has been included in this years' Capital Works Program as a provisional project, conditional on the finalisation of a funding agreement from the Federal Government's Community Development Grant Program," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Club president Cory Youd said a new facility will be a welcome upgrade for the Deloraine Squash Club.

"It will put our club in a more visible and accessible location. With the potential of more courts, it will make it easier for the club to schedule roster nights and will give the club the ability to expand our membership into the future. This will also allow us to provide development programs, including junior training in conjunction with schools and Squash Tasmania," Cory said.

Once approved, the \$2m development will be built on the western side of the Deloraine Community Complex.

"Subject to final construction cost estimates, the project may be staged, with stage one being the construction of courts one and two followed by the construction of courts three and four and the balance of the fit out as stage two," Mayor Johnston said.

Grant funds flow for small business recovery in Meander Valley

Council has delivered over \$100k in grant funding to assist small businesses in Meander Valley to recover from COVID-19

"Fifty local businesses were successful in securing a grant from Council's \$1.7m COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package at what was a critical time in the recovery phase," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Businesses across a range of sectors including retail, hospitality, manufacturing, tourism and child care benefitted from the funding, which was designed to assist with the recommencement of operations as restrictions eased.

"All grant recipients have demonstrated significant financial hardship. Council is committed to providing real support and hope that this goes some way to help with the impact that restrictions have had on our local businesses. This initiative builds on general rate and fee relief already provided by Council," Mayor Johnston said.

Successful applicant Peter, proprietor of Verde Cafe in Westbury said the support will assist with business continuity.

"The funds will help us recover our operational finances. Throughout the lockdown, we were one of the few hospitality businesses that decided to remain open for take away service and I would like to thank all our customers for their support. They are the reason we are still operating," Peter said.

Lars and Sarah, owners of the Marakoopa Cafe' in Mayberry have been versatile in their response to COVID-19, building on their existing business to

include accommodation, events, functions and a cinema set amongst their spectacularly landscaped garden.

Sarah said Council's Small Business Grant assisted them to further invest in their online presence.

"Information regarding weddings, concerts, events, workshops and special occasions can be accessed online and this has allowed us to promote fully, the destination we have created both locally and nationally."

Joanne Mason, proprietor of Jo'z Beauty Therapy in Westbury has further developed her retail product lines as restrictions had temporarily shut down her normal operations.

"Making sure the most innovative products are available for my clients has always been extremely important. The grant funding has assisted me to take steps towards increasing my online presence and my range of products to include some of the latest collagen and make up lines that treat and feed your skin," Joanne said.

As a member of Council's Community Grants committee, Cr Stephanie Cameron said reading through the applications was an overwhelming experience.

"While I felt very sad to read of the immense loss of income some businesses faced, I was also very proud of our resilient community who have adapted and found new ways to keep on keeping on," Cr Cameron said.

The Small Business Grants formed part of Council's COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package adopted in May.



Above L to R: Verde Cafe' owner Peter, guests enjoying the show at Marakoopa's amphitheatre and owner of Jo'z Beauty Therapy, Joanne Mason with some of her latest product lines.

Council adopts \$20m operating budget

Meander Valley Council has adopted the 2020-21 Budget confirming a nil increase in General Rates for property owners.

In determining this year's budget, Council considered a number of pressures including increases in operational costs, loss of dividends from TasWater, the absorption of CPI increases and the use of savings to support the community during COVID-19. These factors have resulted in a forecast operating deficit for 2020-21.

"We have been very conscious of our role in assisting to keep the costs of living down. Despite rises in operational costs, we have placed a hold on any increase to the General Rate, fully funded our COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package and maintained capacity for capital works projects and service delivery," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Meander Valley Council continues to have the lowest General Rate in Northern Tasmania which provides funding for a range of services such as animal control, public and environmental health, management of planning and building regulations and the maintenance and construction of roads, bridges and community facilities.

Mayor Johnston said that waste continues to be a challenging space.

"Due to market driven changes the costs associated with recycling collection and processing have risen by over 70% in the past two years and as a result, kerbside collection charges have had to increase by a small margin.

"We are being proactive in our response to this issue and will be undertaking a review of waste management services to determine the best way to manage costs, meet service expectations and limit the level of waste going to landfill," Mayor Johnston said.

Council also approved a \$15m Capital Works Program which includes projects that have been brought forward to assist with local economic and business recovery.

"Council remains in a strong financial position with capacity to return to an operating surplus by 2026-27," Mayor Johnston said.

For detailed copies of Meander Valley Council's 2020-21 Budget and Annual Plan visit www.meander.tas.gov.au

Budget Highlights

\$1.7m

COVID-19 COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGE

Comprehensive and immediate relief to reduce expenses for residents and businesses and longer term measures to assist the municipality to recover.

\$1m+

BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Over \$1m for the reconstruction of bridges at:

- Coiler Creek, Railton Road
- Liffey River, Liffey Falls Road
- Black Sugarloaf Creek, Allens Road

RENEWED COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Council will renew its community and lifestyle programs, refresh community consultation and communication approaches to achieve effective, value for money outcomes across Meander Valley.

\$134k

TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY AND LOCAL EVENTS

SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Council will work with peak organisations for economic development, tourism and regional planning.

\$1.5m

ROAD RESURFACING PROJECTS

Funding allocated to road resurfacing projects across 35km of our sealed and unsealed road network.

\$465k

FOOTPATH PROJECTS

Funding allocated for footpath construction work to improve pedestrian connectivity.

Council focuses on strategic waste management

Most recyclable material collected in Meander Valley is processed in Tasmania or interstate before being distributed to local or national markets.

In recent years, the cost of recycling has increased markedly and the demands for recyclable commodities has become more variable.

“These circumstances have created challenges for all Councils. As our townships grow, expectations around waste services change and this year, Council will be undertaking a review of our waste management strategy,” Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Objectives will include assessing future landfill requirements, FOGO (food organics, garden organics) and other collection services, regional collaboration and circular economy opportunities to divert more waste from landfill.

“The Meander Valley community does a great job recycling and as individuals we are all more aware than ever of our responsibility to reduce the amount of waste we produce. By reviewing our strategy we ensure Council maintains a proactive response to what is a challenging space for local government,” Mayor Johnston said.

Council will be consulting with the community in the development of the new waste management strategy which is scheduled to be undertaken in coming months.



Doing the ‘right thing’ over 1,000 times a week!

Council’s Works crew are responsible for approximately 260 public bins across the municipality.

Some of these are emptied daily, some twice weekly **equating to over 1,000 services per week**...even on public holidays!



We’ve made some changes! It’s now much faster and easier to register.

Council’s annual Hard Waste Collection is an opportunity for residents to dispose of items that cannot be deposited in kerbside bins such as whitegoods, furniture, old toys, computers and electrical goods.

Residents must register to receive the service.

Previously, as part of the registration process, residents were required to list each item they intended to put out for collection.

From 2020, residents will no longer be required to list their items, however all items are still required to comply with the Hard Waste Collection Guidelines and the limit of 3 cubic metres per household still applies.

Registrations can be completed online, over the phone or in person at Council’s office.

If registering online:

You will need to enter a valid email address so a confirmation email can be sent containing your registration number. If you do not receive a confirmation email within 24 hours you must contact Council on 6393 5300 to complete your registration.

Items which fail to meet the Hard Waste Collection Guidelines will not be collected.

Information about what can and cannot be collected is available on Council’s website at www.meander.tas.gov.au or collect a copy of the Hard Waste Collection Guidelines from Council’s customer service office at 26 Lyall Street, Westbury.

**Registrations are open until
5pm Saturday 31 October 2020.**

New wicket ready for cricket season!

A new wicket is ready for cricket season at the Westbury Recreation Ground. The new 6-wicket block was completed using funds from the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund, the Tasmanian State Government Communities Sport & Recreation Fund and contributions from Council.

"The new block is a great asset for the cricket community. This is the only turf pitch in Meander Valley and it will now be able to be in play for the next 15 - 20 years," Sport Facility Officer Patrick Bessell said.



Above: Westbury Shamrocks President Michael Claxton and Council's Sport Facility Officer Patrick gear up for the new season.

Community Car Service Update



Above: Mayor Johnston, Cr Cameron and Deputy Mayor Kelly pictured with one of the well utilised community service vehicles.

Council's community cars are normally operated by a fantastic and dedicated team of volunteers based around Westbury and Deloraine.

Under temporary COVID-19 arrangements, the Community Car service is being delivered by Council employees and fees are currently waived.

Up to fifty journeys are undertaken each week which highlights the value of this service for the many residents in our community who are unable to drive themselves to medical or essential appointments.

It is envisaged that the operation of the Community Cars will transition back to a volunteer service as soon as possible.

"We are incredibly thankful to the volunteers who operate this important service. While transport is the reason behind the service, there is real value in seeing the community help itself and the benefits that come from interactions between volunteers and those who use the service.

"We are keen to see the service handed back to the community as soon as possible," Mayor Johnston said.

Bookings for the community car can be made by phoning Council on 6393 5300.

Online Services



A range of services are available online by visiting www.meander.tas.gov.au:

Service Requests

Lodge service requests for a range of non-urgent maintenance issues, vegetation management and more.

Dog Registrations

New applications, cancellations, apply for a discount and update your details.

Council Meetings

Lodge questions with or without notice and listen to audio recordings of Ordinary Meetings of Council.

Payments

Make a rates, dog registration or other payments.

Property & Planning Information

View planning maps, development applications and perform a property search.

Cemetery Search

Search memorial and burial records.

Other ways to contact Council

Phone 6393 5300

Email mail@mvc.tas.gov.au

Customer Service Office
26 Lyall Street Westbury, 7303