



CONFIRMED COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 22 October 2024

6:00pm

Meeting held in person

Town Hall, Maryborough, Hybrid and livestreamed on the internet.

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors:

Liesbeth Long (Mayor)

Grace La Vella

Geoff Lovett

Chris Meddows-Taylor

Gerard Murphy

Wayne Sproull

Anna de Villiers

Minutes confirmed via circular resolution on 25 October 2024.

1. Commencement of Meeting and Welcome

The Mayor commenced the meeting at 6pm, welcoming all present, with an Acknowledgement of Country and the Council Prayer.

Present

Councillors:

Liesbeth Long (Mayor)
Grace La Vella
Chris Meddows-Taylor
Gerard Murphy
Wayne Sproull
Anna de Villiers

Officers:

Interim Chief Executive Officer Sally Jones
General Manager Community Wellbeing Emma Little
General Manager Assets Infrastructure and Planning Amber Ricks
General Manager Corporate Performance Mick Smith
Manager Governance Property and Risk Cecilia Connellan

MAYORAL STATEMENT

Before we begin the last meeting of the 2020-2024 term, I, as Mayor would like to make a Mayoral statement on behalf of all councillors. This is in regard to our long serving Councillor Geoff Lovett who, after 27 years, is retiring from Local Government.

Cr Geoff Lovett was first elected to the newly created Central Goldfields Shire Council in 1997 following the amalgamation of councils in Victoria and the appointment of Commissioners.

At the time of his first election in 1997, as part of the first democratically elected Council for Central Goldfields Shire, Cr Lovett was already well known within Maryborough and the surrounding area as a community and business leader.

The commitment to work hard and contribute meaningfully to the community, were inherent by deeply held family values, which his parents were widely known and revered for.

From the beginning of his period as a Councillor, Cr Lovett demonstrated an unswerving and clear vision for a great future for the Shire and its residents and a willingness to tackle the real issues and opportunities which would make a difference for the better.

That vision and the passion to realise it, has remained unchanging and undiminished over the years.

It has been a constant and ready inspiration for countless Councillors serving with him, especially those new and feeling their way.

Cr Lovett has consistently championed the importance of education and has contributed to this not only through Council, but through his own time and resources.

He could see that the formation of a new P-12 Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) offered an important opportunity, and he has remained an active, engaged and consistent champion of this initiative, including in the inevitable challenges and difficulties of its early days.

As in all things, his oversight and guidance during the period of development of MEC was considered, practical and relevant.

Maryborough has always been Cr Lovett's home and his pride in its history and achievements and the opportunities he could see for it, were constant and a driving force of change for the better.

He advocated passionately for important developments in Maryborough including the redevelopment of High Street, the return of passenger rail, the creation of Station Domain and countless other improvements and enhancements.

A very special legacy, which resulted in a national local government award and a state planning commendation, was the leading-edge vision and realisation of ensuring the sustainable reuse of the former heritage school building and sites to meet contemporary needs resulting in invaluable benefits.

The national award recognises the level of creativity, success and complexity of this project and the limited resources a rural shire had to deliver that success.

The preservation of the beautiful built heritage of the schools, their sustainable reuse to meet contemporary housing needs and the gifting from the Victorian Government of what is now the Council offices, as well as the magnificent presentation of Station Domain were immediate benefits.

The favourable impact to local economy of the repurposing activity and the long-term financial benefits to Council through its increased rate-take, is immense.

It is a matter of public record that the Local Government Inspectorate was critical that Council did not receive appropriate compliance advice during some aspects of that long and complex project, something which under the Local Government Act, it was not the designated responsibility of the elected Council to provide.

That does not diminish in any way the invaluable benefits to the community of that initiative or detract from the key leadership role Cr Lovett played in achieving those benefits.

Cr Lovett is a keen and knowledgeable local historian. He has cherished and championed our wonderful built heritage legacy and actively worked to protect and enhance buildings and sites including those which might seem less grand, but also tell an important story.

Quite clearly the preservation and enhancement of our built heritage and the recognition of its importance owes a great deal to Cr Lovett's leadership.

His keenness to actively support the benefits of the Bid for World Heritage Listing of the Victoria Goldfields, now comprising 15 local councils, reflected his vision for the key role our heritage plays in our future sustainability and prosperity.

This deep and broad knowledge of local history was invaluable in the recent Maryborough Heritage Review supported by Extent Heritage.

Cr Lovett was able to guide and inform that review with ease and ensure the significant outcomes it achieved. Maryborough's rich history and heritage and its fine buildings and significant precincts will be preserved for generations to come as a result of this important work, so well informed by Cr Lovett.

At the same time, much needed development can take place in appropriate locations without undue hindrance.

This was a most significant project which Cr Lovett will look back on with well-deserved satisfaction.

A key pillar of Maryborough's built heritage is its Town Hall - including the Council Chamber. Recently, Cr Lovett championed the restoration of the Town Hall, taking special care and paying attention to the Council Chamber, thoughtfully attending to every detail to ensure the Chamber both met contemporary needs, but also embraced the rich historical legacy which it represents.

It was fitting that the September 2024, Ordinary Council Meeting was held in the Chamber with Cr Lovett present.

Parks and gardens have also been an area of keen interest for Cr Lovett, and he has a detailed knowledge of our tree plantings, especially our rare and special species.

His attention and care for their preservation is well known and respected.

The importance of growing our local economy and job creation have been an area of constant focus for Cr Lovett both in terms of new industry and retail attraction, as well as providing support and assistance for existing business to expand, develop and prosper.

The success of new industry establishing in our Shire has benefited from his experience, wisdom and good guidance.

Returning to Council in 2020, Cr Lovett recognised that there was concern in the community about the role and future of Maryborough Aerodrome which he made an election priority.

Throughout his final term on Council, Cr Lovett worked to ensure the Aerodrome received the attention it needed to fulfill its potential.

More recently, he accepted the role of Chair of a Council Committee for the Maryborough Aerodrome, leading the work of stakeholders and officers to plan the functioning and future of the Aerodrome.

Cr Lovett has been a creative, skilful and wise Mayor during the terms he served, leading the Shire with encouragement, focus and polished delivery.

He is a highly experienced and impressive chair. Cr Lovett has led the Shire through good times and in more challenging times.

When faced with difficulties, his resolve and commitment is unflinching, to make the best decisions for the future of the Shire, as it is in happier times.

Those more difficult decisions continue to serve Council and the community well. He is always a thoughtful, helpful and generous mentor to new Councillors.

It was fitting that during one of Cr Lovett's terms as Mayor, the Australian Navy named one of its vessels, HMAS Maryborough.

To mark that special naming, Cr Lovett and Mrs Margaret Lovett were invited as VIP guests on a coastal voyage on the HMAS Maryborough, marking a truly unforgettable occasion.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) officially recognised Cr Lovett's completion of 20 years of service as a Councillor in 2021 and conferred the MAV 20 Year Service Award to him.

Cr Lovett also holds the MAV Mayor Emeritus award, which is awarded to any serving councillor that has completed three full terms as Mayor in Victoria.

Cr Lovett's dry humour and quick wit can bring the house down and can masterfully diffuse a stressful situation.

This is an important reminder that Council life must not only be purposeful and focused but should also be enjoyable and fun.

Thanks, and recognition must also go to Cr Lovett's wife, Margaret, who herself is an active community leader and has been a hardworking, dedicated and able Mayoress.

Over many years Margaret generously gave of her time, resources and energy.

Quite simply Cr Lovett's contribution has been unparalleled in the history of Central Goldfields Shire and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

His tireless resolve to make a difference for the better continues.

The benefits of his contribution to Council as a Councillor and as Mayor, will impact generations to come. For this, Council and the community can only record their deepest thanks, gratitude and appreciation.

Cr Lovett's colleagues on Council join together to wish Cr Geoff and Margaret a long and immensely happy retirement with their extended family.

2. Apologies

Cr Murphy

3. Leave of Absence

Nil

4. Conflicts of Interest

Nil

5. Confirmation of Minutes from previous Council Meetings

MOTION

That Council confirm the following Minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

5.1 Minutes from previous Council Meeting dated 15 September 2024.

5.2 Confidential Minutes from Council Meeting dated 15 September 2024

Moved: Cr Meddows-Taylor

Carried: Cr La Vella

Carried

6. Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees

Nil

7. Petitions

Nil

8. Officer Reports

8.1 CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL 2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

This report presents Council with the Central Goldfields Shire Council 2023-2024 Annual Report following the in-principal adoption of the Financial and Performance Statements at the 16 September 2024 meeting.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Annual Report 2023-24
2. Notes the Annual Report 2023-24 has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

Moved: Cr Lovett

Seconded: Cr La Vella

Carried

Cr who spoke to the motion: Cr Lovett, Cr La Vella

8.2 S11A UPDATE TO INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT AND AUTHORISATION FOR STATUTORY PLANNING

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Council that the S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation for the previous Coordinator of Statutory Planning be revoked and the new Coordinator of Statutory Planning be added to the S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorization under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The current Manager of Statutory Services, and current Statutory Planner will remain on the instrument.

The S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation appoints Council staff under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, which allows them to fully discharge their duties and responsibilities under that Act.

MOTION

That Council adopt the updated S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation for the Manager of Statutory Planning, the Coordinator of Statutory Planning and the Statutory Planner under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Moved: Cr Meddows-Taylor

Seconded: Cr De Villers

Carried

Cr who spoke to the motion: Cr Meddows-Taylor

9. Councillor Reports and General Business

Nil

10. Notices of Motion

Nil

11. Urgent Business

Nil

12. Confidential Business

Nil

13. Meeting Closure

The meeting closed at 6.27pm