

SHIRE OF KATANNING

ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING

Minutes Annual Electors Meeting of the Shire of Katanning held on
Wednesday 4 February 2015 in the Katanning Town Hall,
Commencing at 7.30 pm.

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Shire President declared the meeting open at 7:30pm.

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

PRESENT

Presiding Member: Cr Alan McFarland - Shire President

Council Members: Cr Robert Godfrey – Deputy Shire President
Cr Owen Boxall
Cr Richard Kowald
Cr Heather McCarley
Cr Danny McGrath
Cr Craig McKinley
Cr Alep Mydie
Cr Leisha Wood

Council Officers: Dean Taylor, Chief Executive Officer / Project Manager
Andrew Holden, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Sarah Martin, Director of Corporate Services & Community Services
Uwe Striepe, Director of Engineering & Development Services
Diana Marsh, Manager of Finance

Council Observer: Taryn Human, PA to the CEO

Electors: Shirley Brokenshire, Peter Kerin, Ernie Maples, Ella Maesepp, Julie Bucknell, Glen Henie, Jill Richardson, Michelle Dennis, Doug Cherry, Liz Guidera, Tim Clegg, Glen Watts, Nathan Garlick, Mark Stevenson, Ron Smith, June Rundle, Karli Downer, Val Philpott, Julie Maxwell, Carin Thompson, Sue Beech, Bev Kowald, Hazel Doak, M. Doak, Ainslie Evans, Irene Farrow, Steve Blyth, Davina Davies, Troy Hamon,

M. Van Koldenhoven, Howard Fraser, Viv Beeck, Arthur Todd, Lynn Coleman, Bill Coleman, Gwen Poett, Terry Poett, Peter Willis, Fay Trudge, T. Catling, D. Catling, Todd Stewart, Di Stewart, Wilma Severin, Lawrance Severin, Dick Dawson, Anna Boschman, Karl Kowluv, Peggy Sambell, Jim Sambell, Stephen Dennis, Brent Ladyman, Peter Jolly, John Jenkins, Ashleigh Mills, Trudy Hall, Ian Knapp, Narelle Knapp, Linda Maples, Joan Garstone, Ray Evans, Derek Stock, Tania Edwards, Leonie King, Edna Monck, Fay McFall, Mark Sander, Sue Stevenson, Alese Stevens, Tiia Van Koldenhoven, Peta Batchelor, Greg Pains, Pat Kennedy, Gladys Wells, Neville Wells, Ron Lockley, Karene Thomas, Kirsty Flugge, P. Caldwell, Margaret Innes, Shane D'Aprile, Kristy D'Aprile, Mel Dowling, Simone Colton, Kim Gartery, Merv Dore, Kath Crosby, Raj Malik, Alaway Harris, D. Garnett, Max Wise, John Goodheart, Barbara Groves, Glen Kendall, Nereda Hicks, Des Hicks, JKL Richardson, Jessica Van De Waag, Rocky Hales, Pam Brokenshire, Bev Lockley, June Rundle, B. Rundle, Henry Poett, Lorraine Poett, Isabel Bradbury, Clarrie Bradbury, Norma Holzknacht, N. King, Peter Squibb, Norm Flugge, Andrew Pritchard, Nancy Wake, Andrea Salmond, G. Rodwell, Robert Garlick, Maureen Gairen, Robert Gairen, J. Hopley, M. Hopley, Marco Cassettai, Margaret Cassettai, Shannon Hampton, Arthur Fewson, Val Jolly, Susie Racic, Lesley Balinski, Matt Kerin, Vernon Hall, Carly Vartesi, Shanon Dodd, Leonie Daw, Lesley Crosly, Keith Whitehead, John Maxwell, Rosemary McFarland, Dawson Harris, Bev Lockley, David Scons, Bill Benhup, Bronte Rundle, Maurice Matthews, Julie Stock, Mohammed Aeson, Ziagul Sultani

Apologies:

Sam Davis, Executive Manager of Strategic Projects

3. ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14**Moved: MR MARTIN VAN KOLDENHOVEN****Seconded: MR ARTHUR TODD**

Mr van Koldenhoven spoke about the strong financial position of Council and questioned the need for 2014/15 rate increase.

Cr Alan McFarland advised that he will address his query under general business.

- 1. That the Annual Financial Report for 2012/2013 be received; and**

ACCEPTED**Moved: CR ALAN MCFARLAND****Seconded: MR STEVE BLYTH**

- 2. That the Shire President's Report be received.**

ACCEPTED

Cr Alan McFarland thanked everyone for being there tonight and showing an interest in what's happening in the shire and our community. Besides the presidents report tabled in the document, he wished to add a little bit more to what's been going on.

Once again it's been a busy year. Besides the normal operations of the Shire, there has been a change of focus of our special projects. The winding down of the now completed saleyard project and the shift of priorities to the actual work on the super towns projects, such as the upgrade of Clive Street, the town square construction, work on the town hall, the demolition of parts of the Katanning Unit hotel and soon to be construction of the new shire offices.

The Shire has been very busy with lots of projects on the go. There have been ups and downs on all the things that have been going on and I'd like to touch on both the ups and downs.

With the work in Clive Street, we have had virtually the entire outside workforce there at some stage or another: The road and construction crews, the gardening crews and our building crews. There have been some very concerned members of the public. I've had calls about their florescent vests, hats and even wondering if they have sunscreen on. I've had people ask about hard hats, hearing protection and even been told how many cigarettes a worker had while in the street. And then of course we get down to the concerns on the English language and how it is sometimes used. I don't think that the outside workforce has ever been under so much public scrutiny. Nor likely too for many a year to come.

Many of you may not realise, that by legislation, the only person that is permitted to speak and represent the Shire in public on shire matters is the Shire President. The holder of that position may delegate that in some instances, and indeed I have, letting the CEO, various Councillors and staff speak about various specific issues. I will make no apologies for the fact I have always been optimistic, upbeat and encouraging about the prospects for our community. As has the CEO, the acting CEO and all others.

When this legislation was put in place social media was not even considered. One person in the news this week called it, "Electronic Graffiti". There are many much braver behind a keyboard and screen and the shire is an easy target. I am and have been active on social media, (as is the Shire as a whole now), and my simple philosophy has been this: I don't care what your opinion is

as long as what you are saying or basing your opinion on is factual, is aware of all the circumstances, and being truthful about your motivation for saying what you are saying. No matter what, social media is public and sometimes people forget that.

And dealing with factual, let us talk about some of the other issues doing the rounds in the community. Thank you for those amongst you that have come to myself with concerns on what you have been told by others. I'm not sure if it's a hobby for some and a bit of a joke or they are being genuinely malicious but there are some things that need to be brought out in the open.

- The CEO Dean Taylor did not get a Million dollar bonus for completing the Saleyards.
- The shire is not being, has not and is not going to be prosecuted by the Heritage Council for the work being done on the Katanning Unit Hotel or any other structure.
- The shire has not got any fines from Worksafe. Not for the Unit Hotel or any other matter.
- The CEO has not got personal fines of \$350,000 or any other amount from Worksafe or anyone else.
- There has not been any cost overrun on the work on the main street or the town square. (In fact rather the opposite).
- We do not have "Stockpiles" of bollards. Admittedly we have spares, but no stockpile. Or of any other item that isn't genuinely needed.

For those of you that have been told such untruths, mis-information or even outright lies, please examine the motivations of those telling you such things. No matter what conspiracy theory they may pedal, they are wrong.

If there is anyone with a genuine, factual complaint or allegation on Councillors, Staff or anyone else to do with Council, they can make a complaint to the Department of Local Government, to the Police, the ACCC, to me as Shire President or the Complaints officer of the Shire who currently is Acting CEO Andrew Holden. One factual, provable offense can dismiss and prosecute staff members, individual Councillors and in rare circumstances dismiss an entire Council. Just one complaint by one person.

I hate to disappoint the organisers of this secretive petition supposedly doing the rounds, but no matter how many signatures you have, no matter who you get to sign it, no matter who in power you approach, if you don't have it based even just one factual complaint it's not worth reading in the dunny. If anyone has any questions about anything you have heard please just ask me. Certainly I've been asked a few times by various Journalists about some of the junk they have been fed by "concerned citizens". If any was true it would have been printed in the herald, the weekender and even the West. Indeed, if even a bit was true we'd have the 7.30 report, today tonight and even 60 minutes really putting our town on the map. Get real people!

Onto happier subjects:

The Town Square: It's being used. We've had some functions there, the Light up the night, the Christmas on Clive, the Carols by Candlelight, movie nights of Red dog and How to Train your Dragon, (guardians of the Galaxy is on this Saturday), I see people sitting having lunch and coffee regularly. Locals and visitors. If you have any community event coming up, please consider this as a venue. It's yours, the communities. If you feel like standing on stage and playing a guitar, just do so. I'm pleased to announce that by the end of the month we hope to have free Wi-Fi online. To many this doesn't sound like much, but I think you'll find there aren't many other towns that have it. To the youth, visitors and tourists this is quite important. And after many years of complaints and waiting, we finally have a new public toilet at that end of town! Clive Street: the majority of the initial project is complete, but we have more work fixing around the corners at Daping, Richardson and Carew Streets. We are hoping to get funding to complete

the length of Clive to the Railway line so it is all finished and the same. This would not be nearly as intrusive and extensive as the other work we have completed.

We also hope to get funding to complete some tidying up and making of a "Tree Lined Boulevard" from the Railway line all the way down to the Adventure Playground and the Great Southern Highway.

We have other funding applications in for the renovation and re-vamp of the Adventure Playground. We certainly hope to have a lot of community involvement in that, from the planning and even construction of it.

Main Roads will soon start construction of the roundabout at the Clive/Great Southern Highway intersection. They were talking about starting last October but we convinced them that work like that during Grain Carting season wouldn't be a good idea. The purpose is to slow vehicles down, make them think about where they are going next and even if we get one or two cars a day to come into town, have a look and perhaps even spend some money in local businesses then the idea has worked.

Dome is still coming to town. We've had the handover of the dollar. Contrary to rumour once again, Dome is not waiting for paperwork from Council. If anything we are waiting for plans from Dome. We have funds to spend waterproofing the building and there is no point replacing a roof when Dome want to keep it. There's ongoing discussions happening there but hopefully should see work start by the end of next month.

Council's Town Centre Facade refurbishment scheme is getting alot of interest. It's not often that a Local Government can assist owners of private property like this. If you own property on Clive or Austral Terrace, you should talk to the Shire. If you rent or lease, you should be asking your landlord or agent to have a look at this scheme.

The renovation of the Katanning Unit Hotel is well under way. New floors and a new roof so far in what is left of the old building. Once the roof is completed, the building will lose a little bit more out back. Site works will start on the new Shire Offices and Chambers. Between the dome, the new offices, chambers and business incubator, as well as the businesses already in place, that whole area will be revitalised, lived in and busy.

The town hall we are in, once again, funding permitting, we plan to finish the renovations we started, including a new kitchen, bar and toilets.

The Piesse lake: Work will start stabilising the island and putting the concrete wall around the perimeter. Part of this is Saleyards monies, as it is an evaporation pond for that facility. As yet we can't use the water, but that may change in the future. Please bear in mind that this area is going to be an ongoing project for many years to come. It's not a 1, 2 or even 5 year project. I suspect that the full development will be ongoing for the next 10 – 20 years.

The Recreation and Leisure Centre is now 18 years old. We may have to start planning for its 21st! Things do change over time and what we built it for, how it's being used and what we want for the future changes too. The rec centre Master plan is being worked on and please everyone that uses the Rec Centre should get involved in the process. We need to plan for the next 20 years.

Other things that have or are going to happen, though not necessarily by Council are:

- The announcement by the Agricultural Minister of the 10 million dollar investment over 4 years into the Sheep research facility to be based around the Ag department here.
- According their quarterly report on the ASX Ausgold are planning on restarting their gold drilling program so there will soon be more action on that front.
- We did announce last year at our Ratepayers meeting that a new doctors surgery would be opening. This obviously did, and Pete and Marty Lotter are very busy.

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- The announcement by Kim Hames, the WA minister of health, on the SIHI funded upgrade of the Katanning Hospital. Tenders should be out by October, with work starting on the extensions and upgrades this time next year.

And while on health matters, although Council pushes the ongoing obstetrics issue at every turn, at every level, we are yet to see a result.

The most important thing in any community is the people and how they make a difference to the community.

Individuals can and do make a fantastic contribution in their own right, a prime example is the anonymous "Daddy Monster". I have no idea who it is, but may I acknowledge the fun, positive way you have contributed to the feeling of the community as a whole. Not only what you do in person, but a really positive use of social media promoting positive actions.

Council organised the John Stanley workshops and out of that has come the "Katanning Action Network". Once again, no matter what you hear, Council does support KAN and what it is trying to do. If anything we unashamedly want to use you. It's a great idea that you are activating the community to look at the planning processes, as an example, the Piesse park development. We really want the KAN network involved in the revamping of the Adventure Playground, not just the concept and designs, but also the construction, maintenance and would value your input. As well as the rest of the communities input too.

As an idea, can I suggest that in the longer term you look at something that has worked reasonably well with the library/art gallery and have a "friends of the Adventure Playground", Friends of the town Square" and maybe a Friends of the Piesse park" as an ongoing projects and committees. I see the ladies chairing the KAN committees and many others involved in the audience tonight and I would like to thank you for the work you are doing, from the cleaning up of derelict buildings, to the decorating of shop fronts, the planning of fake poppies and even fun stuff like planting flags on islands. I'm very impressed with the new garden opposite my store where I see people watering and caring for the garden on a regular basis.

And on a personal note, may I say that I appreciate the efforts you have taken to be seen as politically neutral within the community. You all have much more credibility because of that with all concerned.

Another committee that is doing very well is the Early Child Hood Hub. Plans have now been drawn up and there will be a public meeting at 10 am in the Library gallery meeting room on the 13th of this month. I am very hopeful that here will be some major progress on this in the near future. Thank you to Davina Davies, Tania Edwards and their members for the work you have been doing on this project.

There are too many other committees and people to even try and thank. From the sporting clubs, the scouts and guides, P&Fs, churches, Margaret Renk and her Read Write Now tutors, Dramatic society, Service clubs like rural Youth, Apex, rotary and Lions, volunteers in the bushfire Brigades, fire and emergency Services, St Johns, you know what you are all doing. For the part you are playing in making our community a better place to live, on behalf of Council I thank you.

To the CEO and Project Manager, Dean Taylor, the only person that Council technically employs, thank you. I've been on Council a while and I've never seen the amount of projects, funding and works happening before, on this or any other Council I've been talking to. There is a certain amount of incredulity on what is happening in Katanning by other similar Local Governments and even State government departments. This I put down to the enthusiasm, the dynamism and thinking outside the square that we seem to now expect from you. Thank you for your efforts.

Our Acting CEO Andrew Holden has held us to the financial lines and dealt with the day to day operations of the Council. It hasn't all been smooth sailing, but Andrew has kept us on an even keel and all the legislative requirements taken care of and then some. Thank you Andrew.

Our directors of Corporate and Community Services and Engineering Services, Sarah and Uwe, have had a busy year as well and likely to get busier again in the next year. Sarah seems to be

everywhere and Uwe has had to hit the ground running to keep up with everything that we have going on. To the two of you, your efforts are appreciated.

To all of the other staff: Admin, Library/Gallery, Rec Centre, roads and construction, garden and the building crews. Thank you as well. None of what we are achieving would happen if it wasn't for the work you are doing.

We are lucky to have enthusiastic and progressive Councillors. They are involved, committed to the job they have been elected to do and open to new ways of doing things. My deputy president Rob Godfrey always seems to be there when I need him. To all of you thank you for your efforts and support.

And after all that, I look forward to what we have happening in the next 12 months.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

Questions on Notice

1. Shirley Bronkenshire

It was reported that there were 10 new businesses that opened in Katanning during 2013/14 – can we be told their names so they can be supported. Why was there no mention of the businesses in Clive Street that closed down during the year?

Summary of Response: Cr Alan McFarland

Advised that the Shire does not keep records of businesses that close down in Katanning and no Local Government would normally report on. The number of businesses reported as opening was incorrect as the comment was brought forward from the prior year report and missed from being updated. Since the question on notice the administration has determined the figure is at least 6.

2. Shirley Bronkenshire

Businesses were disrupted by the renovations on Clive Street.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Some disruption is inevitable when doing major infrastructure upgrades.

3. Peter Kerin

The number of Executives reported as receiving more than \$100,000 has increased from 2008/2009. Does Council have any plans for curtailing this area of expenditure in the next 1, 2 or 5 years, or is this expenditure going to be allowed to spiral out of control?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Cr Alan McFarland advised that staffing was aligned with workloads and that the staffing growth was aligned with projects and Executives were on fixed term contracts and as such numbers can continue to be managed in line with future project work.

He then said that this is largely an operational matter and asked Andrew Holden, the Acting Chief Executive Officer to respond further.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

Andrew projected 2 tables on the overhead that showed the ratio of senior officer staff to FTE which had remained reasonably constant while there were increases and decreases in FTE over the years 2008-2014. Andrew also explained the high value

returned to the Katanning community over these years where \$62 million of capital projects had been delivered in comparison to the Shire of Kojonup which had less than \$20 million of capital works in the same period. He explained the need for staffing to deliver on the substantial project work load since 2009 and explained the direct and indirect value to the community from those projects.

4. Katanning Action Network

Why is there a lack of maintenance at the All Ages Playground and what is happening with the redevelopment?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

The large slide has been taken away for repairs and safety modification. This work was originally allocated to a contractor who failed to complete the work within a promised time frame, resulting in the task being reallocated to our fabrication workshop but it needs to fit in with the prioritisation of all the fabricating work. The \$400,000 that was allocated in the budget is to support the development of the concept for the larger area and provide the opportunity to commence should grant funding be obtained. The public will be consulted as the concept develops.

5. Katanning Action Network

What is the timeframe for the development at Piesse Lake and what is happened with the outcomes from the public comment period?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

There is \$350,000 in the budget for the wall to be completed around the lake so the lake can be filled with water. \$85,000 has been set aside to commence some basic landscaping work in the area. The concept plan for the area has started and is expected to be presented to Council before the end of the financial year. Comments from the public will be included in the business case. This is a long term project for Council in the order of 5-10 years or more.

6. Katanning Action Network

There are signage issues around Katanning. What is planned to improve signage in town?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

We've improved signage in the approaches to town late last year and also added additional signage in town. Council will continue to look at, and implement, particular signage as appropriate.

7. Katanning Action Network

Have funds been obtained for stage 2 at the Town Square and Mainstreet Redevelopment? When will it start? When are the bins being installed on Mainstreet and the Town Square? When is the paving going to be finished?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Funding for stage 2 is yet to be announced but we are hopeful that Council's application will soon be successful and if so, work will carry on following the completion of stage 1. Paving has recently re-commenced taking the paving into Richardson, Daping and Carew Streets and the green bins are currently distributed in the street and

Town Square. The Shire is currently finalising requirements for the bin housing structure.

8. Katanning Action Network

When will the dump point be available? Are the Councillors aware of the CMCA rally in October?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

We have recently become aware of the CMCA rally in October. We will be ready and Council has allocated funding for the RV dump point. We have not decided where it will go as yet. We do have 2 alternative places; preferred place is at the Lions Park.

9. Katanning Action Network

Does Council have a maintenance program as there seems to be a general lack of maintenance of Council infrastructure?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Yes we do have a maintenance program and it appears in the budget with money allocated to various assets. We have a full time maintenance person and have employed another person due to the volume of maintenance.

10. Katanning Action Network

When will the Lake Ewlyamartup project be finished? Will we lose the grant funding if the project is not finished?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

There are issues involving the funding of aspects of the development at the lake that have emerged and need to be resolved before works continue. This is largely an operational matter so will ask Acting CEO, Andrew Holden to further respond.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

When the grant application was being developed by Katanning LCDC, Steve Gash, and the Director of Engineering Services provided a cost estimate for a 12m boat ramp of \$30,000 of materials. Somehow prior to Katanning LCDC lodging the application a couple of months later the boat ramp had become 32m long without a corresponding increase in its cost estimate but at this stage it doesn't matter how that happened. When quotes were obtained for the preferred construction method of castellated concrete it was \$130,000 just for the materials. The Shire has been working on trying to resolve this shortfall by considering other construction methods and has a grant application in with the GSDC attempting to cover the shortfall. The funding body has requested no further spend of funds until a viable resolution is determined.

11. Ernie Maples

Would like the Council to make Lake Ewlyamartup a priority. Shire not progressing on it.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

We are supportive of the project and it's great to see the community interest in it.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

Work on the access road was in Council's capital budget. Council has only budgeted for the auspiced Katanning LCDC components to be an in and out transaction within the operating budget. The Shire will continue to seek a resolution of the situation to lead to the improved facility envisaged.

Ella Maesepp

Ella confirmed what Andrew Holden said was correct in relation to the Department of Transport funds, however she said there was a second Lotterywest grant funding all the works except the boat ramp, toilet and access road and there were no restrictions on that grant why works could not go ahead immediately.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Clearly there has been a miscommunication regarding this grant.

12. Julie Bucknell

Does Council think it is acceptable for Local Government to knowingly display a community group project as their own and at what point is it acceptable for community groups to be bullied and threatened with legal action by shire executives for voicing an opinion they don't like? I was told 2 weeks ago that the dates for the Harmony Festival were changed. I was intimidated by 3 officers of the Shire coming to my office. I pleaded with the Shire to keep the date the same for this year as 10,000 books advertising Taste of the Great Southern had been printed.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

The date of the Harmony Festival was changed to align it with the International Harmony Day and in response to feedback which was received from the public that the Sunday after the Woolarama was not suitable.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

I am sorry if you felt intimidated by myself, Sarah Martin and Sam Davis coming to see you about trying to find a resolution acceptable to both the Shire and yourself; it was meant to convey the importance of being able to explore all options.

13. Greg Paini

How can the size of the Harmony festival be condensed into the Town Square.

14. Greg Paini

Greg Paini asked when the businesses in Clive Street will be notified of the event and street closure.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Clive Street between Richardson and Daping Streets will be closed to allow that area to be used for the festival along with the Town Square - a similar set up to Christmas on Clive. Businesses will be notified of all the arrangements for this event and encouraged to remain open for business.

15. Greg Paini

Greg stated there had been a high turnover of staff over the years particularly from within the office. He was concerned about the loss of corporate knowledge and the effect on the continuity of services. He said he had a list of 29 staff members who had

left the office within the last 2 years. While he accepts that staffing is an operational matter he asked the Council why they had not been concerned about this turnover.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Council employs the CEO and the CEO employs all other staff. Council has high expectations of our CEO and senior staff in managing the Shire's operations. It is true that there has been some turnover of staff and some of that has been in relation to seeking some cultural change. Some people who have not responded well to that have sought other employment options and have left the Shire.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

In 2013/14, 55 staff left the Shire. An analysis of that figure shows most were due to end of fixed term employment contracts and young casual staff. Others have resigned for other jobs in town or moved to another city or country. Andrew Holden advised that he was happy to provide the stats to anyone who wanted to see them.

16. Jill Richardson

Exit interviews can be a valuable source of information for organisations to understand why employees choose to leave, and to identify both areas of strengths and areas for improvement for the organisation itself. Exit interviews are recommended practice in WA by the Equal Employment Opportunity compliance templates. They should be conducted by someone who is not the departing employees reporting manager. Particularly with such high levels of staff departure occurring, and recurring themes of workplace dissatisfaction being heard, why had exit interviews not been adopted as standard practice for the Shire of Katanning?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Cr Alan McFarland passed the question to Acting Chief Executive Officer Andrew Holden as it's an operational matter.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

Prior to Andrew Holden being able to respond to Jill Richardson questions Julie Bucknell interjected suggesting that the Shire has a culture of bullying and intimidation and that she had experienced this because he had threatened her with legal action over an article she had published in the Clive Street Chronicle. Andrew Holden responded to Julie Bucknell that she had not been threatened merely advised that the Shire's lawyers considered the article she had written was defamatory against Shire employees and those employees had requested him to take action to maintain their safe work place. Employees considered defamed had also sought personal legal advice which had similarly considered that the article included defamatory material. In regard to exit interviews the Shire does not use a formal questionnaire but does endeavor to always have informal discussion with resigning employees where all the issues raised in Jill Richardson's question are attempted to be canvassed.

17. Michelle Dennis

Michelle Dennis advised the meeting of the circumstances of her departure from the Shire as she sees them. She advised that she had received all her contracted benefits associated with the early termination of her contract and that she had made an unsuccessful claim with the Fair Work Commissioner but still had issues with the process and asked for Councillors to better understand these matters.

18. Doug Cherry

Councillors recently publicised that the Shire's local purchasing policy had delivered value on the capital works program but it's not the case when purchasing vehicles. Of the 13 vehicles which were purchased by the Shire, only 2 were purchased from Katanning which seems contrary to the purchasing policy? What are the reasons why vehicles are not being purchased in Katanning? Is the local price too high or are the locals not interested?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

All vehicles are purchased following Council's purchasing policy guideline which is designed to both deliver value while giving some preference to local businesses. All vehicles are serviced locally or by the Shire's mechanic.

19. Greg Paini

Greg stated that his employer, Edwards Motors, had never been approached to quote or given a chance to supply vehicles to the Shire.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

Andrew Holden advised that he was wrong because he had personally approached Adrian Edwards each year even though Adrian had been reluctant to supply a quote because he said there was not sufficient profit in a Local Government priced deal and did not want to waste any of his allocation of vehicles when they could be sold at greater profit margin.

20. Liz Guidera

Enquired about what the \$500,000 interest earned during the year – what is it going to be used for? She also expressed concern at the result of the streetscape design and pavers long term.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Interest earned on grant funds held by the Shire has to be spent on the same project as the original grant funds under the financial assistance agreements. The Shire will be seeking approval from the funding body to use that interest on some components on the planned streetscape work. The issues with pavers at the Commonwealth Bank end of the work will be redressed when the stage 2 of the works continuing paving down to the Dore Street is completed.

21. Tim Clegg

Tim advised that he pays his rates solely for the road to get in and out of town and believes he doesn't get value from maintenance of it. He doesn't believe he gets anything else from the Shire and doesn't believe that Shire plant is sufficiently utilised mentioning downtime on graders. The Shire needs to ensure it maintains roads. Tim expressed the opinion that the Shire was paying too much attention on Capital Projects at the detriment of road maintenance.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

At times the Shire has difficulties keeping grader drivers in its workforce as do most Shires'. The downturn in mining construction may release some of those skilled workers so this may change in the future. The works budget has continued to spend a similar amount on the maintenance of roads during the years of this increased capital projects.

22. Glen Watts

I put in an expression of interest of work on the Saleyards project and didn't get any. Why are the locals not being employed?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Many locals were employed on the Saleyards project and continue to be on the continuing capital projects like the Streetscape and Town Square.

23. Lady new to town didn't provide her name

Congratulated the Councillors on so many good things being done in town. She commented about the problems with the microphones and asked that staff who were responsible for dealing with functions in the Town Hall be properly trained so that they know where to find all light switches etc as she had experienced a problem recently.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

The lights in the Town Hall are very complicated. Senior staff members are involved in the training of staff and I agree that the microphones have been a problem tonight and again apologise for that.

24. Nathan Garlick

The Shire's new administration/civic centre is a \$5 million development. How can you justify this? Nathan also voiced his concerns of the conditions of the Lake Coyrecup Road saying that it is dangerous during wet weather.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Yes we can justify this. The current Shire building was built in the sixties and is no longer 'fit for purpose' for a modern administration. Council needs a modern office to carry out business into the future. Cr McFarland expressed he wants Katanning to remain the centre of the Great Southern district and this building will set up Council for 30/40 years and enable Local Government to be centralized in Katanning should amalgamations happen.

He advised that Council was aware of the Lake Coyrecup Road issue but that it was not easily resolved and is subject to normal budget processes and prioritisation.

25. Mark Stevenson

3 years ago there was talk that the SuperTown in Katanning would include becoming RV friendly?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

This is being addressed this year with the RV dump point being a necessary item prior to the status being awarded.

26. Ron Smith

What is happening regarding the bus shelter?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

PTAWA have approved a design that is consistent with marker towers incorporation in the streetscape upgrade. The bus shelter will now be fabricated in the Shire's facility.

27.Lynn Coleman

The cemetery is in a bad state and there are large pine trees that need removing. Who is responsible for the maintenance and repairs?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

We are aware of the pine trees and quotes are being sourced. Maintenance is budgeted for and is carried out at the cemetery on a regular basis.

28.Lynn Coleman

Clive Street is dirty. The wind blows the leaves into the shops. Richardson Street is a nightmare to reverse from angle parking and speed signs need to be put up.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

The streetscape design incorporated the angle parking wants the nibs at the end of Richardson Street are installed your concerns should be addressed and the Shire is now using the new sweeper / scrubber machine in the streetscape area and that will help your concern about dirt in the street.

29.Stephen Dennis

Mr Holden in answering an early question you highlighted the increases in reserves. Have these increases come from grant money?

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

No grant money has directly contributed to increases in reserves. The innovative approaches that the Shire implemented on the Saleyards project included obtaining approval from the Steering Committee (that included funding body representatives) to charge the project at private works rate for various items – effectively the commercial margin was thus added to reserves.

30.Shirley Brokenshire

Is the information regarding Lake Ewylamartup and the Harmony Festival not getting through to Councillors from staff?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

We are all involved in the community with the best intention to assist the town. The issues regarding both the funding of the Lake Ewylamartup boat ramp and the Harmony Festival have been addressed in earlier responses.

31.June Rundle

Has Council decided to relocate the Bowling Club?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Council has not made any decision about the future of the Bowling Club. Council is supportive of the current Bowling Club's consideration of relocating to the Katanning Country Club and believes that this would be beneficial to both the Bowling Club and the Country Club.

32.Karli Downer

There is loose concrete paving outside the Commonwealth Bank. The flowers in the concrete boxes are very high and you cannot see someone crossing the road.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

The works crew is aware of both items and has scheduled to replace the “instant colour” with other plants.

33.Ella Maesepp

It is well known that the three most senior officers within the Shire of Katanning have very close personal relationships, particularly the impending marriage of Dean Taylor and Sarah Martin. Very close relationships such as this can increase the risk of clouding impartiality and creating “cliquey” environments. What steps do Council take to regularly ensure that the relationships in place do not create barriers to other members of the organisation, nor reduce the impartiality of day to day decision making?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Our auditors conduct appropriate reviews and tests of the Shire’s financial and other records and they continue to provide “clean” audit reports. Councillors are obviously aware of the personal relationship between the CEO and the Director of Corporate and Community Services and are as comfortable as the Auditors with that.

Summary of Response: Andrew Holden

Mr Holden said that the Project Manager and Director of Corporate and Community Services are work colleagues and that he has a good working relationship with them but neither of them are particularly close friends. He said that he was frankly offended by the suggestion that his professional approach or impartiality could be at all compromised by that working relationship.

34.Ella Maesepp

What is the current grievance process for staff to lodge complaints within the Shire of Katanning, and what is the alternative process available to staff who do not feel comfortable in approaching the designated Grievance Officer, or feel that they’re not being taken seriously?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

There are clear grievance procedures that all staff have received training in. It is not appropriate for an aggrieved staff member to approach Councillors – they need to follow grievance procedures. Ultimately all staff can go to the Acting CEO with any unresolved grievance and staff can go to the Fair Work Commission with anything that falls within their domain and other agencies should staff remain aggrieved after seeing the Acting CEO.

35.Val Philpott

Asked whether not for profit groups could not be charged hiring fees for community events and instead only charge a refundable bond.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Council establishes fees and charges for facilities with lower charges for not for profit groups. In addition you can apply to the Shire for a donation of the scheduled charge and alternatively there is the Library Community Room which is free for meetings of not for profit organisations. Unfortunately the Shire cannot provide all facilities free of charge to all community groups.

36. Julie Maxwell

Main Street is a travesty it has inconvenienced the public and myself far too long. She believed Councillors should be available to the public on any matters and that they should be where people can go to complain about issues with the Shire. She said that Councillors independence was compromised because of being a paid position and that she had no confidence in the Councillors.

Arthur Todd immediately stood and said he took offence on behalf of Councillors to much of what Julie Maxwell had said. He reminded Julie Maxwell much had changed in Local Government since she had been on Council and that 4 of the Councillors finish their appointment at the Local Government Elections in October.

37. Carin Thompson

Highly commended, Cr Robert Godfrey for his involvement in the clearing up of the graffiti. Would have liked a 4 way roundabout including the Kojonup Road.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

In the initial stages of design Council tried to incorporate the Kojonup Road but it wasn't feasible making the roundabout too large and costly.

38. Carin Thompson

The swimming pool only opens at 3pm. On hot days the times should be extended.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

YMCA is contracted to run the swimming pool this year. The times have not changed from last year. The net loss on current opening times is around \$250,000 and longer opening hours would only add to that.

39. Sue Beech

Not enough for a 13 year old to do in Katanning. There are no restaurants

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

There are youth programs that run at the Rec Centre. Council would like to have more dining options in town particularly with our multicultural profile.

40. Liz Guidera

In the redevelopment of the Town Hall is there going to be air-conditioning?

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Not in our current plans

41. Peter Kerin

I understood the Bowling Club had to leave its current premises by 2016 and I had been working towards them relocating to the Country Club for the last 3 years. Now from the previous response I ask have I been wasting my time? At last year's budget meeting I advised Councillors that it wasn't an 8% rate increase because of the reduction in the discount available from 5% to 2% made it an 11% increase.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

Council has not made any decision about the future of the Bowling Club. Council is supportive of the current Bowling Club's consideration of relocating to the Katanning Country Club and believes that this would be beneficial to both the Bowling Club and the Country Club.

42. Shirley Brokenshire

Spoke about the forthcoming Council elections in October and that she had been advised by a sitting Councillor that he would not have stood for Council if he had known the requirements put on Councillors including the possibility of being fined (\$5000) if Councillors don't comply with conduct requirements.

Summary of Response: Alan McFarland

The Shire President is the nominated voice of Council and under the Local Government Act Councillors do have a code of conduct that they need to follow.

5. CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 10:47pm.