



# **AGENDA**

## **Special Council Meeting**

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**6.00pm Tuesday 12 June 2018**

**VENUE:**  
**Bannockburn Shire Hall**  
**Council Chambers**  
**12 High Street, Bannockburn**

NEXT ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING  
6.00pm Tuesday 26 June 2018

Copies of Golden Plains Shire Council's Agendas & Minutes  
Can be obtained online at [www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au](http://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au)

## Code of Conduct Principles

### WORKING TOGETHER

We Councillors will:

- acknowledge and respect that a diversity of opinion exists among us;
- recognise that each of us has different life experience, knowledge and values, and that all of these contribute collectively to our discussions;
- behave with courtesy towards each other, Council officers and our citizens;
- conform to the policy and precedents that guide the conduct of meetings;
- attend punctually and participate in all relevant meetings, workshops and briefings;
- share reasonably in the representation, ceremonial and hosting tasks of the full Council; and
- honour the majority decisions made by the Council, irrespective of our own position, and explain these decisions frankly to the community, once made.

### BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY

We Councillors will:

- identify our financial and personal interest, or potential interest, in any matter that comes before the Council;
- be honest and truthful;
- comply with laws and the regulations deriving there from;
- respect Council property and be frugal in its use, where allowed;
- avoid using our position for personal gain or to achieve advantage over others or to obtain preferential treatment;
- be sympathetic to the legitimate concerns of our citizens;
- act impartially when making decisions and have due regard to the needs of the community as a whole, rather than that of narrow vested interest; and
- acknowledge the role of Council officers in providing advice to us and in implementing Council decisions.

### MAKING COMPETENT DECISIONS

We Councillors will:

- without diminishing the short term focus, approach decisions with due regard to the long term needs of the municipality;
- form policies with regard to the needs of the entire Shire;
- direct our attentions to the strategic and statutory needs of the municipality rather than short term, transient, operational issues;
- seek to fully inform ourselves on the issues before Council before making a decision;
- take all reasonable steps to improve our knowledge of matters relevant to our municipal duties; and
- use and respect the professional knowledge of Council officers and other advisers to Council.

**Order Of Business**

**1 Opening Declaration..... 5**

**2 Acknowledgement of Country ..... 5**

**3 Apologies and Leave of Absence ..... 5**

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5.1 Draft 2017-2021 Council Plan and the 2018-19 Council Budget - Hearing of  
Submissions..... 6



**1 OPENING DECLARATION****Our Vision**

A healthy, safe, vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community supported by strong leadership, transparent governance and community partnerships - Our Community, Our Economy and Our Pride.

**Opening Prayer**

Almighty God, Help us to undertake our duties impartially and honestly, in the best interests of the people of the Golden Plains Shire. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

**2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Council acknowledges the traditional Wadawurrung owners of this land. Council pays its respects to Wadawurrung Elders both past and present and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of Golden Plains Shire.

**3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE****4 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

## 5 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

### 5.1 DRAFT 2017-2021 COUNCIL PLAN AND THE 2018-19 COUNCIL BUDGET - HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS

**File Number:** 42-64-006; 40-01-016  
**Author:** Jason Clissold, Finance Manager  
**Authoriser:** Richard Trigg, Director Corporate Services  
**Attachments:** 1. Submissions - Speakers

#### RECOMMENDATION

**That Council hear the submissions from those requesting to address Council in support of their submission lodged under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 in respect of the Golden Plains Shire Council proposed Annual Budget 2018-19 endorsed by Council on 24 April 2018.**

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After placing the draft 2017-2021 Council Plan and draft 2018-19 Budget on public exhibition, 34 submissions were received in relation to the Budget and no submissions were received relating to the Council Plan. Of these submissions, five submitters have requested to speak in support of their submission. The topics covered in these five submissions are:

- Increase in Child Care Fees
- Bannockburn Children Services Profit
- Proposed Community and Civic Centre
- Waste Management

#### BACKGROUND

Under Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), Council is required to consider submissions prior to making a determination on the adoption of the Budget and Council Plan. Following hearing from the Submitters who wish to speak to their submission, Council will consider all submissions prior to adopting the Budget and Council Plan at the Ordinary Council meeting to be held in Linton on Tuesday 26 June 2018, commencing at 6pm.

#### POLICY CONTENT

- Local Government Act 1989
- Local Government Amendment (Fair Go Rates) Act 2015
- Valuation of Land Act 1960
- Council Plan 2017-2021
- Strategic Resource Plan (SRP)

#### DISCUSSION

At the Council meeting held on 24 April 2018, Council resolved to formally prepare the Budget and place both the draft Budget and Council Plan on public exhibition and invite submissions. At this meeting, Council also agreed to hear from any submitters who wished to speak in support of their submission relating to any proposal (or proposals) contained in the draft 2018-19 Council Budget, made in accordance with Section 129 and 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 at a Council Meeting to be held Tuesday 12 June 2018; and consider a recommendation to adopt such 2018-19 Council Budget at the Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 26 June 2018.

## CONSULTATION

The Draft Annual Budget and Council Plan were advertised in accordance with the Act in The Courier (Ballarat) and Geelong Advertiser. Copies of the documents were made available at Council Customer Service Centres, on Council's website and at the Bannockburn Public Library. Residents were also advised using websites, social media, community posters and media releases.

Written submissions were invited and submitters could request to address Council in support of their submission. No submissions were received in relation to the Council Plan, 34 submissions were received in relation to the Budget and 5 people have requested to speak to their budget submission.

During 2017-18, Council has continued to consult with the community on key strategic issues and projects within the Shire.

This consultation is a part of Council's ongoing commitment to community engagement that was such an important component in developing the 2017-2021 Council Plan and Strategic Resource Plan.

This consultation has included asking the community to respond to some targeted questions on the Budget and Council Plan and attend community forums aimed at gathering information on the direction the community wishes to see Council take over the coming years.

Council engaged a third party to work with the community and Council on the development of the Council Plan and engage with the community on key issues that impact the SRP.

The consultation included a comprehensive community engagement and communications plan encompassing:

- A community survey;
- Community Listening Posts facilitated by Council officers for face to face conversations with the community about their priorities for the future;
- Community Workshops facilitated by mach2 and Council officers to have a more in depth conversation with the community; and
- A Community Reference Group to enable more in depth involvement of members of the community.

The Budget communications plan included promotion of the public submissions process which was open for four weeks. Communications channels include media releases, social media, Gazette, Council website, newspaper public notices and posters at Customer Service Centres.

Formal public consultation has been undertaken as detailed above in accordance with Section 223 of the Act.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with Section 80B of the Local Government Act 1989, the Officer preparing this report declares no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

## CONCLUSION

Having exhibited the Draft Annual Budget and the Council Plan review, received and heard submissions, Council will consider reports at the ordinary meeting of Council on Tuesday 26 June 2018 to adopt the Budget and the revised Council Plan.

Council will hear from Submitters in the following order:

David Head  
Rebecca Diehm  
Melinda Hampshire  
Brooke Lynch  
Monique McWha

72 Dog Rocks Road  
BATESFORD 3213  
26<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Mr Eric Braslis  
CEO Golden Plains Shire

**Subject: Budget submission 2018-2019 – D.B Head**

The draft budget is a very broad brush analysis of the Shire expenditures and incomes for the 2018-19 financial year. Ratepayers have to rely on the assessment of each line item by Councillors during their workshops and have to assume that Councillors have analysed and questioned each line item where appropriate to ensure accuracy and fairness.

From a ratepayer perspective the best we can do is look at each item and, in many cases, compare the new budget with previous budgets. In so doing I find that three items in the current draft budget stand out for comment.

**Bannockburn Childcare Services**

The 2016-17 budget detailed a cost of \$52000 for running the facility.

The 2017-18 budget showed an underspend of \$28000. This was shown in error as a cost in the report when it should have been shown as an underspend.

The 2018-19 draft budget shows an underspend (or profit) of \$216000.

I would like to understand how this profit has been generated and to have confirmation that this amount will be returned to consolidated revenue and will not in a lowering of childcare fees.

**Proposed Community and Civic Centre**

In previous Council correspondence the overall cost of the proposed Community and Civic Centre has been quoted as \$10 million. The 2018-19 draft budget does not show an overall cost but simply asks for a commitment of \$5 million as the first tranche. The second tranche is yet to be determined. This leaves the overall cost of this project open ended.

To commit to the first tranche without an estimate of the overall cost is irresponsible.

The fact is that, once this project is started, there is no going back. Council will have committed ratepayers to potential extra costs which experience shows can, and probably will, escalate.

Before the borrowing of the first tranche is committed it is imperative that ratepayers be given a reliable indication of the overall cost of the project based on the work carried out by the Architects and Engineers together with estimates of inflation etc.

My submission is that no borrowings should be entered into until ratepayers are shown and agree to the final design and also agree to the final costing estimates.



Ratepayers must be advised of the final estimates and informed of the cost to rates over the life of the borrowings. I cannot rationalise that the borrowing costs will remain at 4% interest for the 30 year life of the proposed loan.

**Waste management.**

Council has included an extra \$18.00 in the waste management charge. That is, from \$252 to \$270. This extra cost is not detailed in the 2018-19 draft budget.

I requested Cr.Sharkey to give me a breakdown of this extra cost and he has advised that it is to cover the cost of :

- Street sweeping \$56,000
- Commence rehabilitation of Rokewood closed landfill (EPA requirement) \$70,000
- Review the Waste Strategy \$30,000

I challenge the suggestion that the first and third items detailed above meet the edict espoused by the ombudsman when asked to adjudicate on the waste management charges made by the Wodonga Council.

With respect to Council charges for waste management the ombudsman Ms.Glass has stated that:

- “The practice of generating a surplus was at odds with the intent of the Local Government Act, which allows councils to levy a waste management charge for **‘the collection and disposal of refuse’**.”

I submit that street sweeping is not a waste management action. It does not meet the ombudsman’s edict that it is part of **‘the collection and disposal of refuse’**.

I also submit that reviewing of the Waste Strategy should be part of the normal job description of the Director of Assets and Amenities and included in the salaries of his department.

Both of these items should be part of the Cost of running the Shire and be covered by general rates

**My submission is that at least \$10.00 of the \$18.00 should be removed and the cost be transferred to general rates cost.**

Regarding the extra \$60.00 levied for the disruption of the recycling service. I trust that Councillors have reviewed all the information require to support the charge bearing in mind that this is over and above that being charged by other Shires.

I seek leave to address the Council on this submission on the 12<sup>th</sup> June inst.

Signed

David Head

**Full name:** Rebecca Michele Diehm

**Postal address:** 6 Merlot Court

**Town/Suburb:** Bannockburn

**Postcode:** 3331

**Email address:** rebecca.diehm@gmail.com

**Phone number:** 0418137355

**Please type your submission in the box below.:**

Bannockburn Children Services – fee increase

RE: G/L 50195 Page 104 of the FY18/19 Budget Draft

I would like to make the below submission:

The 24% increase in childcare fees as outlined in the email by Jill Evans on 30/4/2018 to parents has not been adequately or transparently justified, and is excessive. An increase of this nature should have been put to the community for consideration prior to inclusion in the proposed budget.

The nature of the fee increase is not adequately covered in the budget summary, and there is a failure to clearly outline the decision making processes underlying the increase, and avenues of objection and information sharing available to enrolled families.

The rise in fees does not appear to be substantiated by documented centre upgrades, new programs or staff wage increases. The argument that the fee increase is "to ensure the Bannockburn Children's Service is more financially viable and that Council spends less on subsidising the service" is not in line with previous budget reports, and the reported subsidising of the centre would likely be minimal compared to other areas of council expenditure. This also begs the question, if the above statement is correct.. as to what is going wrong with the financial administration of the centre that it needs to charge above and beyond virtually every childcare centre across Geelong, Bellarine and the Surfcoast including both council and for profit businesses?

According to the Geelong Advertiser on 30/4/2018, GPS has recently received a financial grant to assist in the provision of childcare, and I wonder if this has been taken into account in the development of draft budget?

I note that the timing of this increase coincides with the Federal Government commitment to assisting families with the cost of childcare, which in my case will now remove the additional benefit we would receive, in addition leaving my family financially worse off than in previous years before the government initiative by thousands of dollars (and my child only attends three days a week!). If I need to stop my child's enrolment because of this financial burden, then he will have to leave the comfort of the wonderful carers that he has had for the past two years,

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and experience unnecessary levels of anxiety and distress whilst transitioning to a new care provider.

If the increase is genuinely related to increased costs which are yet to be outlined to the community, this information should be provided to the community for consultation given the extremely high increase in fees, allowing community members the opportunity to make suggestions and problem solve alternative solutions. This would also provide for greater transparency and community understanding of the issues at hand. Unfortunately, local families have been thrust an email fait accompli, detailing an unexpected and additional financial burden of which the news itself and the nature of its delivery has had caused distress to local families.

Unfortunately despite correspondence to council, to date I have been unable to obtain a current copy of the Fee Policy, as referred to on the GPS website. I have only been provided with a 2014 policy that was due to be updated in 2017. I have also not received replies to numerous emails requesting information that should be readily available such as the above policy, the amount of notice required to withdraw a child from the service, and avenues of appeal. This lack of communication and information may well be due to the overwhelming response to the fee increase. Nonetheless, it is unacceptable that this response was not foreseen, and that council does not have processes in place for such levels of enquiries.

**Upload documents here:**

**Do you wish to be heard by Council in relation to your submission?:** Yes, I would like to present to Council

**Do you wish to present your submission in person?:** Yes, I would like to appear in person

**Full name:** Melinda Hampshire

**Postal address:** 29 Hamish Drive

**Town/Suburb:** Bannockburn

**Postcode:** 3331

**Email address:** melindah\_7@hotmail.com

**Phone number:** 0425389792

**Please type your submission in the box below.:**

Dear Sir/Madam

Having read through the draft budget I am appalled yet again by the Golden Plains Shire Council and I am writing specifically to express my objection to the proposed rise in the fee's at the Bannockburn Children's Services from \$109.00 per day to \$135.00 per day. There are a number of reasons this proposed increase is outrageously unjustified and unfair.

The draft budget shows an estimated surplus of \$3.14 million for the Golden Plains Shire. In the expenditure \$18.3 million has been allocated to "Employee Benefits". Whilst I understand that the Golden Plains Shire must adhere to financial commitments to their employees as outlines in their agreements the allocated amount equates to almost half the entire expenditure for the Golden Plains Shire. With this in mind, the reasoning given for the proposed increase to the day care fees was stated as "to allow council to better meet the cost of running a high-quality, best-practice service." It is evident from this statement that the extra funds are not purely to increase the services and facilities offered to our children and I am not aware of any planned upgrades for the children at the centre. Further, section 3 of the draft budget outlines council intends to "improve the health and wellbeing of families by increasing access to a range of quality universal and specialist children and family services." The increase as proposed will and has already had a dramatic effect on the number of children attending the centre. Your statement of "increasing access" is opposite to what councils proposed actions have achieved.

I have been involved with the centre for 2 years and it employs over 40 committed, educated, and kind hearted employees. This proposal is already, and if approved, will force many if not all staff to seek employment elsewhere in turn have a damaging financial and emotional impact on them, their families and our community.

The financial and emotional impact is also being felt by those families who rely on the centre. The proposed increase has forced many parents to remove their children from the service to a new service. These children range in ages starting at 6 weeks and they are being forced by council to be exposed to an unnecessary change.

The changes to the Government Subsidy in July is to further benefit families utilising day care services. One of the key reasons behind the subsidy is to encourage parents to return to the workforce. With such a significant increase to childcare rates families are being forced to

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consider if working is a financially beneficial option. For many it won't be and they will be able to access other Government benefits while caring for their children.

I have given notice at the Bannockburn Day Care as I cannot afford to have multiple children in the centre for at such an excessive fee. It would be my preference to stay, however to do so I would need written confirmation within the next few days that the fees would remain affordable. If I was to return to work full time with two children in day care at the proposed rate I would be working just to pay childcare. I am saddened by having to seek alternate child care and force my child to resettle in a new environment when he is extremely happy at the Bannockburn Centre.

I think council need to have a look and think at the bigger picture. Increasing the rates so excessively brings extreme financial pressures to most and is going to force families out. The lack of attendance may result in it not being viable for the centre to remain open at all, therefore leaving many employees without a job and an income to support their families. The closure of the centre would mean sessional day care within Bannockburn would no longer be available. Some parents will make the decision to not work and receive government benefits as an alternative because financially they are better off, putting more strain on our welfare system, the opposite to the goal of the government subsidy. Just as importantly the emotional stress this proposal is putting on families, employees and above most our children is disgusting. Bannockburn whilst growing is a community. The community vibe is one of the things that make it a desirable place to live. The council should be just as disappointed in themselves as the community is in them for even proposing such an increase. I strongly urge council to reconsider the proposed increase.

**Upload documents here:**

**Do you wish to be heard by Council in relation to your submission?:** Yes, I would like to present to Council

**Do you wish to present your submission in person?:** Yes, I would like to appear in person

**Full name:** Brooke Lynch

**Postal address:** 4 Kintyre Court

**Town/Suburb:** Bannockburn

**Postcode:** 3331

**Email address:** brookel@cottonon.com.au

**Phone number:** 0447562663

**Please type your submission in the box below.:**

Bannockburn Children Services – fee increase  
Page 28 of the FY18/19 Budget Draft

Even though not directly mentioned in the FY18/19 Budget Draft, councils proposed 24-31% fee increase is excessive

The rise will put a large number of local families under unnecessary financial burden.

The fact that the fee rise is not mentioned in any depth in the summary of the budget leads me to believe that the severity of the rise was trying to be covered up to the community and to those passing the budget through.

The rise in fees is not backed up by documented centre upgrades, new programs or staff wage increases.

The reasoning of “to ensure the Bannockburn Children’s Service is more financially viable and that Council spends less on subsidising the service” doesn’t marry up to the started expenditure vs revenue in the previous 2 budgets as well as this current draft. The subsidising of the centre is minimal, if required at all, compared to other areas of council spend.

The council sees themselves as a preferred employer in the region, boasting that 60% of the Bannockburn Children Services staff are local, but by implementing a fee increase of this magnitude, council would be fully aware of the risk of children being pulled from the centre, impacting the lively hood of the staff due to staff cut backs to meet attendance.

**Upload documents here:**

**Do you wish to be heard by Council in relation to your submission?:** Yes, I would like to present to Council

**Do you wish to present your submission in person?:** Yes, I would like to appear in person

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**Full name:** Monique McWha

**Postal address:** 19 Hamish Drive

**Town/Suburb:** Bannockburn

**Postcode:** 3331

**Email address:** monique\_mcwha@hotmail.com

**Phone number:** 0432040906

**Please type your submission in the box below.:**

If fees increase to \$135 day I will be sending my children elsewhere and advising other families to do the same!

**Upload documents here:**

**Do you wish to be heard by Council in relation to your submission?:** Yes, I would like to present to Council

**Do you wish to present your submission in person?:** Yes, I would like to appear in person

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