

the 2024 year that was

At this time each year we come together as a community on Shire Christmas Tree Day to coordinate a raft of community meetings and, importantly, thank everyone involved as we celebrate all things Murchison. This year is no different, and we thought that perhaps we should finish the year with a bit of memorabilia to take away of what we have been up to during the year. It's just a snapshot, compiled from extracts of this year's Monologue Council Reports and other sources. It's there for you to read, keep, or not.... as you wish, but otherwise, *please enjoy!!!*

Shire President Rossco Foulkes-Taylor, Deputy Shire President Andrew Whitmarsh and Crs Emma Foulkes-Taylor, Greydon Mead, Quentin Fowler, Michelle Fowler and Shire Staff.

Rossco's December Monologue Intro

Hello All,

As the Shire's working year draws to a close, I would like to thank the many and varied crew that have contributed towards a productive 2024.

For those that aren't aware, the 139 Local Governments in WA are classified under a system which sees the biggest councils called Band One (there are 23 of these), and then on a reducing scale, councils are rated Band Two (21), Band Three (35) down to Band four (60) being the smallest.

Some examples are:

Band One. City of Wanneroo, Population 219,788, Total Revenue 207 million \$, Number of Employees 812

Band Two. Shire of Esperance, Pop 13,890, Total Revenue \$50m, Number of Employees 228

Band Three. Shire of Meekatharra, Pop 1,200, Total Revenue \$21.5m, Number of Employees 34

Band Four. Shire of Murchison, Pop 153, Total Revenue \$7.5m, Number of Employees 19

You might say that in the scheme of things we aren't really that significant but, while accepting that I could justifiably be accused of being a bit biased, I reckon we are strongly contributing to the local area and beyond.

Shire Offices

The clearing house for overall administrative and governance operations, run by a very small cohort of staff (4). Apart from administration of the Shire's operations and local government legislative requirements, Shire staff also run a small library, help with vehicle licensing issues, and assist patients board RFDS emergency flights.



Community Input and Support

As part of the long-standing working group model, where community members assist Shire operations, this year community members were invited to assist in the design of a new playground, which is to be located adjacent to the Community Centre and Pool splashpad precinct, as per the 2021 Murchison Settlement Masterplan Report.

The overall theme for the playground area and the types of equipment that would be most appropriate were identified, with a pastoral/wildflower theme

agreed to, alongside areas that make space for astronomy activities such as stargazing and information panels that could also cater to adults.

Every year the Shire provides a range of support activities to assist the Murchison Polocrosse Club run their Polocrosse Carnival.

In April the Anzac Day Ceremony & Museum Community Garden Cleanup were again held in the Settlement and, what is now a regular feature, the Shire continues to support the Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser for the Cancer Council, run by the Murchison Arts Council.



Camp Oven Muster Festival

In August, the inaugural Camp Oven Muster was held in and around the Settlement and, from feedback received, was well-run and successful, so much so that there will be second event in 2025.

Thanks very much to both Shire Crew and local volunteers who contributed to making this such an informative and enjoyable event.



Roadhouse

Shire staff directly operate the Murchison Oasis Roadhouse and Caravan Park as a community business, in accordance with Council's aims of ensuring that Murchison Settlement is an attractive focal point and delivering a range of services providing local support, local employment and tourism attraction benefits.

Accommodating plenty of travellers and providing friendly advice is just part of this and in December we also started the roll out a Local Loyalty Scheme.



The operation however cannot function without the assistance of a number of casuals assisting our Roadhouse Managers.

This year we had backpackers from the Netherlands, Wales and Cornwall, England, who brought a different perspective to the Settlement and also assisted in various Shire and community activities aside from normal roadhouse duties.



Roads Roads Roads

With a land area of 49,000 sq km and 1,948km of roads to look after, 142km of which are sealed, the Shire is not small.

Gravel road construction, sealed road construction, gravel road maintenance, being up to our necks supporting a big international radio telescope project, pulling some hair out trying to manage who drives where on very wet winter roads and conducting a few rescues.

In 2023 Council entered into an Agreement with Main Roads WA to manage what is regarded as the SKA Route on behalf of Main Roads WA, on the SKA Route within or Shire. (Carnarvon-Mullewa, Twin Peaks-Woolleen, section of the Meeberrie-Mt Wittenoom, Boolardy-Kalli and sections of the Beringarra-Pindar and Boolardy-Kalli Roads) In 2024 Council picked up the 27k section of the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road within the City of Greater Geraldton.

In 2023/24 \$9.3m in capital roadworks comprised 48.3km (gravel repairs/resheets), 10.6km (sealed upgrade and 3.1km (reseals)



Settlement Caravan Park Ablution Block.

Building works to establish an extra ablution block for visitors commenced in 2023 and is now virtually completed. Additional grass and landscaping will be undertaken in the new year.



Settlement Pool & Splash Pad

There was a pretty big event in the Settlement during October, this being the installation of the main concrete structure that will form the foundations of the swimming pool being built in the area between the roadhouse laundry and the community pavilion.

A local contractor supplied the 60 cubic metres of concrete required, and the very professional crew from Water Features by Design did the shotcreting. On the day of the pour, work began around 5:30am and the last of the shotcrete was placed by 3pm.

Rosco has indicated that he has always been an admirer of individuals that are very good at their job

and take pride in their work. To observe close hand how the shotcreters placed and then formed up the base shape of the pool (following a design of course, but largely done by eye) was very interesting and he tips his hat to the craftsmanship displayed by the men and women on the team.



There is still a fair way to go before the pool can actually be swum in, but we are getting there. Hopefully, over the next few months the splash pad base will be poured, along with rendering and finishing of the base structure taking place.



Progressing well on constructing a pool and splash pad (no matter the temperature). Rosco has given his word that he will dive in on opening day.

Settlement Water Supply

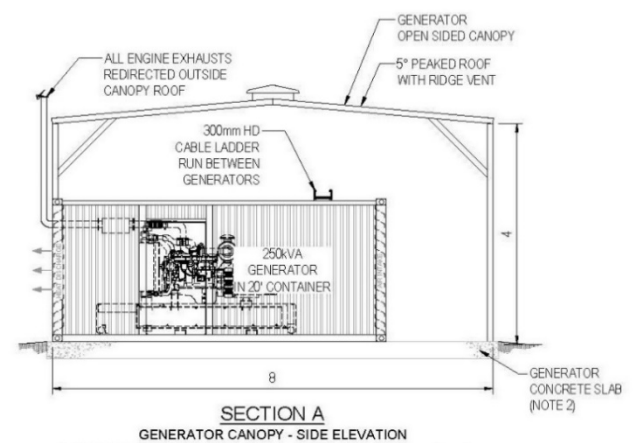
Work towards improving the quality of the water supply for Settlement residents and visitors continued. Works commenced in 2022-23 and are expected to be completed in 2025, with the provision a chlorinator to provide potable water.



Settlement Power

Work continued towards upgrading our Settlement power. During the summer period the existing generator capacity continued to be placed under significant stress.

Designs and specifications for a major upgrade to our power supply have been completed. Works commenced in 2024 with upgrade and replacement of the existing switchboard completed in December, with a new powerhouse to be undertaken in 2025.



Community Garden & Containers for Change

An uplift in the operation of the Community Garden continued in 2024, providing an expanded array of veggies to residents and roadhouse and growing a few chook eggs to share with appreciative contractors working around the Settlement.



Containers for Change also got off the ground in October with Council further supporting this "community focus" action by deciding to allocate the refund income that the Shire receives on an equal basis to the Murchison Arts Council, Murchison Sports Club, Murchison Museum and Community Garden. Only our landfill is not happy.... it's got less to eat!!!

Staff & Contractors

Our very small staff contingent are congratulated for their efforts during the year. Along with contractors, many of whom are locals, the achievements as outlined are impressive.

A special thank you goes to Vicki Dumbris who has just retired after 9 years of positive contribution in the office and community.

At the November 2024 Council Meeting Rosco indicated that Vicki had been a very positive and uplifting person, always friendly and supportive on Council days and a wealth of local knowledge appreciated by staff and visitors alike. Rosco wished Vicki and husband, ex Plant Operator, Ivor, all the best for the future.



Thank You

Thank you again to all that helped our "small" Shire achieve what it did in 2024.

Wishing you a safe summer.

Rosco

