

COMMUNITY UPDATE



Message from the Mayor

These are trying times for all communities. Whether it is you and your family, your business, your club or your group, we want you to know that we are here for you.

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve Council is taking a proactive approach to ensure the balance of the health and safety of the community and staff alongside the provision of essential services.

Some of our services and facilities have closed. Some services will take on a different form for the time being. We are enacting these changes on the back of advice from the Federal and State Governments.

Council will be cancelling face to face events, meetings and consultations and identifying nimble solutions to continue vital Council business.

Our IT staff have put in place measures to give some of our staff greater flexibility to work remotely. Essential services like waste, public amenity cleaning and Independent Support Services will continue.

As well as remaining committed to community safety and wellbeing, Council also has an obligation to look after staff, volunteers and Councillors. Minimising disruption is a high priority, second only to the health and wellbeing of the community. Council will continue to keep the community updated and you can find a range of resources and a full list of affected services at www.buloke.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-health-alert. For the latest updates on the COVID-19 from the Federal Government's Department of Health visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert.

Business Support

Council is here for business. We have established a business support team with staff being redeployed to this area.

We have started making contact with each business in Buloke. Not only to check in and see how the business is going, but to understand any specific challenges businesses are facing.

There are a range of government initiatives in place to support businesses and you can learn more at www.buloke.vic.gov.au/support-for-business

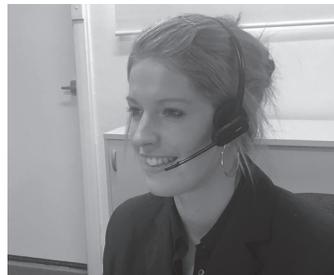
Council staff are reaching out to businesses within the Shire and will continue to check in. If you haven't received a call, expect contact soon.



Library Services

Normal Buloke library sites and mobile service operations have been suspended until further notice. Council is putting in place some nimble solutions for distribution of books. "Borrowbox" is a great alternative to access e-audiobooks, download the free app and use your library membership number for access. You can find more information at www.buloke.vic.gov.au/libraries

Story Time has also ceased for the time being. But, good news! Very soon we will have some video Story Time resources for you and your family. Stay tuned.



Customer Service

We have made some changes to the way customer service is being accessed. Face to face service at Council's Wycheproof Customer Service Office will be accessible by appointment only.

Customer service will still be provided by calling **1300 520 520** and online and there are a range of ways to make any payments you may need without visiting our office. With social distancing measures in place, it is advisable to use one of the online or over the phone options.

Council is still here to support you and our hours of operation remain the same, 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). It will just look a little different.



Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is a vital community service. The service provides nutritious meals and enhances the well-being and independence of clients. Meals on wheels is continuing, but like many services it is a little bit different.

Council is here for our Meals on Wheels clients and for the time being our generous volunteers have been replaced with Council staff as we continue to care for vulnerable community members.



Lake Tyrrell Project Grows

The Lake Tyrrell Tourism Infrastructure Project continues to progress. The project will develop a tourist hub at the lake, with a viewing platform, boardwalk, tourist amenities and the extensive development of a carpark.

Council appointed contractor Gradian Projects are onsite, with many facets of the exciting initiative underway. Construction of a pedestrian path between the bottom of Bailey's Road and The Point has begun and the set out work for the Sky Lounge is complete. Trenching for the water services to the toilet amenities and the concrete slab at the car park at The Point are also finished.

One of the most striking parts of the project so far is the piling for the jetty and boardwalks which has begun. Lake Tyrrell and the Sea Lake community will have a world class tourist destination point of interest to be proud of.



Children's Services

For Maternal and Child Health clients, Normal Key Age and Stage visits will be cancelled until further notice to reduce face-to-face interaction with vulnerable populations during this time.

If you have any questions or urgent needs, please get in touch with the **MCH nurses on 0417 506 174 or you can call the MCH 24-hour hotline on 13 22 29.**

Council is here for families and of course some consultations can occur over the phone, but home visits will be limited to urgent cases.

Immunisation Services will be by appointment only to avoid large groups gathering. Please call ahead to Council on **1300 520 520** to book an appointment.

Social Media

Council has ramped up its communications during the COVID-19 situation. As you know, it is a fast moving situation with Council having to make decisions and implement change quickly.

The best way to keep up to date with the latest is to follow Council on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Did you know Council has over 3,000 people engaged with our platforms? That is one of the highest uptakes per capita for any Local Government Area in the state.

We are going to have some fun during the current situation too, sharing ideas of great TV shows, films and music to discover or fall in love with again.

You may want to get involved with our new campaign too, search **#MyReasonForSocialDistancing**

Council is also working with local radio stations to keep you up to date. Listen out for updates on ABC Wimmera and Flow FM.

Your Council

Councillors will still have key responsibilities that will continue throughout the COVID-19 health crisis. Meetings will still need to be held in a form and the usual decision making on business will continue.

As always, Councillors are here for the community and will offer their support in any way they can.

You can always reach out to your Councillor.

Please note that Cr David Vis (Mallee Ward) is on a Leave of Absence until 30 June 2020.



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Lakes and Community Facilities

When you have beautiful assets that locals and travellers love, it is hard to close them down. But in the interests of everyone's health we have had to close all our lake amenities and caravan parks. Camping in these spaces is not reducing non-essential travel. People need to stay home.

Buildings are closed at Green Lake, Lake Tchum, Lake Watchem and Wooroonook Lakes. This closure extends to caravan parks at Donald Lakeside, Travellers Rest and Gordon Park (Charlton), Wycheproof Caravan Park and Sea Lake Caravan Park.

Other closures include museums, sporting facilities, playgrounds and senior citizens buildings. We look forward to welcoming everyone back once the COVID-19 threat has passed.

PHONE: 1300 520 520

www.buloke.vic.gov.au

