

Our Ref: BM
PUR2/OEVE48446



26 March 2020

Press Release

Cr Bill Manning
Shire President

Administration Centre

15 Fiennes Street

PO Box 96

TOODYAY WA 6566

T (08) 9574 9300

F (08) 9574 2158

E records@toodyay.wa.gov.au

W www.toodyay.wa.gov.au

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A message from the President

The Shire has been active in addressing the issues raised by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our Environmental Health Officer has been carrying out a risk audit of Shire facilities and other public venues to assess those areas where the public are at greater risk of being exposed to the virus. As a result, the Library and Museums will be closed for six months. Advice has also been given to the owners of other venues such as the supermarket and shops as to steps they should take to reduce the risks to the public. Many of the events and festivals over the next six months have been cancelled.

The State Government has amended Regulations under the Local Government Act to permit councils to hold Council and Committee meetings by electronic means rather than in person where a public emergency has been declared under the Public Health Act.

The public will be able to observe proceedings of Council meetings electronically and can still raise questions by sending them in prior to the meeting. For the time being, the Shire will be adopting these measures.

In response to the request from the Premier for local authorities not to increase rates, fees and charges for the next financial year to assist those impacted financially by the restrictions imposed to combat the virus, we are carefully examining all our expenses to see where savings can be made. We will do our best to achieve a balanced budget for next year without increasing rates, fees and charges. This will probably mean scaling back some current services or even cutting them. As far as possible this will involve only non-essential services.

To assist local authorities in framing their budgets for next year, the State Government has indicated it will consider postponing asset revaluations and extending the date for adoption of budgets. Tendering rules may be relaxed to assist local authorities in providing quicker stimulus for their local economies.

I urge you all to regularly visit the State and Federal government websites for the latest advice and to rely on the facts from reliable sources.

Please heed the advice to stay at home and only go out where necessary. Practise social distancing and the recommended hygiene measures. Be mindful of those in the community who may need assistance in various ways. We will get through this.

Cr Bill Manning
SHIRE PRESIDENT