

Friday, 23 May 2014

## WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET AMENDED

Wakool Shire Council's draft budget for 2014/2015 will be amended following a freeze on indexation of Local Government Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years from July.

Wakool Shire Council resolved to make changes to the draft budget at its Ordinary Meeting held on 21 May 2014. Council originally endorsed its draft budget documents at a Special Council Meeting on the 14 May.

"Council has had to change the draft budget in light of the Federal Government's announcement that there will be a freeze on the indexation of Financial Assistance Grants. The impact removes \$105,000 of revenue from our draft budget for 2014/2015," Wakool Shire Council Mayor Cr Neil Gorey said.

The compounding effect on the draft 10-year Long Term Financial Plan is a \$3.2 million reduction in revenue.

"While Council is still viable, this suspension has had an effect on the upcoming budget and long term financial plan," Cr Gorey said.

Cr Gorey added that Council would maintain expenditure on services and operations at the same levels as for the current financial year. It will be reviewing the organisation to find operational savings and is now planning on a reduction in working capital in 2014/2015.

"There is a cumulative effect. Council now has to look at what we will do to reduce expenditure and increase revenue. We will have to explore achieving this reduction through freezing expenditure on maintenance and Council operations across the board."

Cr Gorey said that it was too late to start the process for a special rate variation for the upcoming financial year – the increase in rates for 2014/2015 is pegged at 2.3%.

"In the longer term, we'll be looking at a special rate variation, starting from the 2015/2016 financial year. This must be done through a community consultation process and application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

"We will be looking to commence this consultation process very soon, within the next couple of months."

Wakool Shire Council General Manager Bruce Graham said the organisation was not looking at major structural changes.

"We have undertaken a review as we usually do – as we did in the lead up to the 2014/2015 budget, before this announcement from the Federal Government. However there will be no major changes to the current staff structure," he said.

Councillors have elected to reduce their current allowance to the minimum Councillor allowance level and will not accept a 2.5% increase they are eligible to receive in 2014/2015. The Mayoral allowance will also be frozen at the current level for the next financial year.

Council will also write to the NSW Minister for Local Government, The Hon Paul Toole MP, regarding the impact of the indexation freeze. It will also write to the Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey expressing disappointment regarding the decision.

Despite the Financial Assistance Grants indexation freeze, Council's upcoming budget includes a number of initiatives, focusing on local roads and bridges, projects and economic development.

*Continued...*



**WAKOOL  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**  
*naturally*

# MEDIA RELEASE

The budget makes provision for the implementation of the accelerated timber bridge replacement program for local roads, with five timber bridges to be completed during the 2014/2015 financial year.

There is also \$1.158m for roads and bridge maintenance, \$556,000 for the rural roads resealing program and \$350,000 for gravel re-sheets and formation works.

More than \$1.5m will go towards town maintenance and construction, including \$856,300 for town works maintenance, \$138,000 for Council's resealing program and \$120,000 towards the Stormwater Drainage Strategy for Barham and Moulamein.

The upcoming budget also makes allowance for Council's Economic Development and Tourism Manager position and an update of the Shire's Economic Development Strategy.

The Moulamein Hub and Barham Q Centre projects have also been allocated \$50,000 each for scoping and plan preparation.

"It's great to see the Moulamein Hub and the Barham Q Centre receive money towards scoping and planning, while Council is also continuing with the redevelopment of the Shire offices at Moulamein, which is progressing well," Cr Gorey said.

The draft budget documents are available from all townships within the Shire and Council's website [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au).

Submissions to the budget documents will close at 5.00pm on Tuesday, 24 June 2014 and will be considered at a Council meeting to be held at the end of June 2014.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

Cr Neil Gorey  
Mayor, Wakool Shire Council  
Phone: 0428 536 513

Bruce Graham  
General Manager, Wakool Shire Council  
Phone: 03 5887 5007

Wednesday, 28 May 2014

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR OUTCOMES FROM WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL MAY MEETING

### **DA 37/14 – Dwelling House and building (swimming pool) – 1 Carne Street, Moulamein**

Subject to consent conditions, Council approved the re-siting of a house and construction of a building (swimming pool) at Lot 1, 1 Carne Street, Moulamein. The current residence at 1 Carne Street will be relocated to allow for the re-siting. The building that was formerly known as the Moulamein Retirement Village will be relocated to the site. The proposed relocated building will be elevated to a height of 2200mm, creating a two storey home. An in-ground swimming pool will be installed at the rear of the home.

### **DA 39/14 – Recreation area (ancillary building – Stage 1 and Stage 2) – Lot 53 and 54, Barham Recreation Reserve, Cobwell Street, Barham**

Council approved the Stage 1 and Stage 2 development of a multi-purpose complex at the Barham Recreation Reserve, subject to consent conditions. The complex will include clubrooms, change rooms and other community, sporting and recreational activities at the recreation reserve. A 12-space car park is included as part of Stage 1 of the development.

### **DA 46/14 – dwelling house, storage shed, home business and home industry – Lot 2, 3 Kidman Reid Drive, Murray Downs**

Subject to consent conditions and a reduction in the size of the proposed storage shed, Council approved the construction of a single storey four bedroom home and a storage shed at Lot 2, 3 Kidman Reid Drive, Murray Downs. As well as housing a vehicle, the shed will accommodate a home-based IT business, equipment storage and wine making activities.

Amended plans must be submitted to Council detailing a reduction in the length of the proposed storage shed from 24,300mm to 18,300mm. This is to ensure the development meets the objectives of the Wakool Shire Council DCP 2013 and to minimise any impacts on the adjoining land.

### **Review of the NSW Waste and Environment Levy – consultation by NSW EPA**

Council authorised the Deputy General Manager to prepare a submission on behalf of the Wakool Shire Council to the independent review of the waste and environment levy. Council's submission will oppose the expansion of the levy across NSW.

Council will also bring forward to RAMROC the proposal that the container deposit levy scheme be implemented in NSW.

### **Donation of Kubota mower to Tooleybuc Recreation Reserve**

Council approved the donation of a Kubota mower to the Tooleybuc Recreation Reserve. The donation, valued at \$4,000, will be funded from working capital. A second Kubota mower will be retained by Council as a spare mower for use in water treatment plant maintenance.

### **Tenders – Barham Cleaning Contract**

Council accepted the tender by Katherine O'Brien for the Barham Cleaning contract for a term of three years.

Cr Jackson and Cr Membrey declared a conflict of interest in the item and left the chambers during the presentation and consideration of the report.

## **Partnership agreement – Gannawarra Shire Council and Wakool Shire Council**

Wakool Shire Council resolved to enter into a partnership agreement with Gannawarra Shire Council. This follows a joint meeting between the two councils held last month. The agreement acknowledges a commitment from both Councils to work co-operatively to achieve common goals, efficiency and increase quality and range of services to residents.

## **Engineering operations**

An information report was presented regarding works carried out or planned in the Shire. Some of these works include:

- Works on Maude Road are finished and the road sealed.
- MR319 Thule and Gonn Street reconstruction is ongoing. The kerb and gutter islands are complete.
- A number of roads have been graded around the Shire.
- The design, fabrication drawing and bolt take-off for Nacurrie Road North Bridge over Yarrien Creek and Marunda Road Bridge over Coolbool Creek is complete.
- Steel beams and piling will be delivered for Nacurrie and Marunda bridges over two weeks starting late May. The piling contractor will be on site within two weeks.
- Sewer junction repairs for the Barham Sewer Relining are ongoing.
- Work is progressing on the erosion and retaining wall remediation by Comdain Infrastructure. Designs for the retaining wall steps have been finalised.
- The design of the viewing deck over the intake structure for the Barham Boardwalk is finished, with fabrication works on the viewing deck to start.
- Noxious weeds prevention activities have been carried out, including site inspections and on-ground control.

## **Memorandum of Understanding AVRWMG data collection and reporting guideline pilot project**

Council noted an information report detailing the AVRWMG Data Collection and Reporting Guideline Pilot Project by the Gippsland Regional Waste Management Group and the Central Regional Waste Management Group. The purpose is to streamline the process of calculating volumes of waste streams entering each facility, allowing for more accurate waste disposal figures.

## **Mayoral Minute – impact of the decision to freeze indexation on Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years**

The Draft Operational Plan, Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan will be amended following the announcement in the 2014 Federal Budget that indexation of Local Government Financial Assistance Grants will be suspended for three years starting July 2014.

The March 2014 Quarterly Budget Review will also be adjusted following the announcement that the Federal Government will not make any advance payments of the 2014/2015 Local Government Financial Assistance Grants in 2013/2014.

Council will write to the NSW Minister for Local Government, The Hon Paul Toole MP, regarding the impact of the indexation freeze. It will also write to the Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey expressing disappointment regarding the decision.

To view the reports presented at the May Ordinary Meeting and the minutes, visit [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au) and click on Council meetings from the Quicklinks menu.

The next Council meeting will be held at the end of June at 2pm in Barham.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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Phone: 03 5887 5007



Tuesday, 1 July 2014

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR OUTCOMES FROM WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL JUNE MEETING

### **DA 49/14 – Dwelling house, carport and detached shed – Lot 3, North Barham Road, Barham**

Subject to consent conditions, Council approved the construction of a single-storey house, a detached double carport and detached Colorbond shed at Lot 3, North Barham Road in Barham.

Cr Jackson and Cr Membrey declared a conflict of interest in the item and left the chambers during the presentation and consideration of the report.

### **Review of Wakool Development Control Plan 2013**

Council approved the draft amendments regarding the appropriate maximum sizes for detached buildings to be included in the Wakool Development Control Plan (DCP) 2013.

The draft amendments follow a request from Council to review the Wakool DCP after a number of development applications seeking variation of the size of detached buildings (such as a shed, garage or carport) set by the Wakool DCP 2013.

The draft amendments will be placed on public exhibition. After the public exhibition period a further report will be presented to Council to consider and adopt the amendments.

### **Proposed call for Expressions of Interest – sale and development of 10 Morago Street, Moulamein**

Council agreed to seek Expressions of Interest to purchase and develop a site at 10 Morago Street in Moulamein, which is owned by Wakool Shire Council. Council has been contacted by a local tradesman who is proposing to purchase the site to develop four residential flats.

A further report will be presented to Council for consideration following the Expression of Interest period.

### **Murray Towns Flood Study**

Council adopted the draft reports from the Murray Towns Flood Study, which assesses the Murray River flooding conditions at Barham, Murray Downs and Tooleybuc.

The Murray Towns Flood Study was commissioned by the Wakool Shire Council (with funding from the NSW Government), and was overseen by Council's Floodplain Risk Management Committee.

The reports will be placed on exhibition for 30 days for public comment.

### **Playground replacements and refurbishments**

Council confirmed its Playground Equipment replacement program, with Moulamein to be the priority in 2014/2015. The replacement program will consist of:

- Installation of a climbing net and renewal of junior (boat) section at Barham Riverside Park.
- Replacement of Noorong Street Playground with equipment removed from Barham Riverside Park.
- Renewal of junior (boat) section at Tooleybuc Riverside Park.
- Renewal of junior (train) section at Moulamein Howard Park.
- Renewal of junior (boat) section and minor items as required at Murray Downs Pirate Park.

## **Barham Local Health Medical Trust – request to waive development application fees on DA 25/14**

Council agreed to waive the development application fees for the Barham Local Health Medical Trust (LHMT) for renovations to the Barham Medical Centre after a request from the trust. Council will reimburse \$1240.95 to the Barham LHMT as a contribution towards the renovations.

Cr Membrey declared a conflict of interest in the item and left the chambers during the presentation and consideration of the report.

## **Councillors and Mayor annual fees – 2014/2015**

Council adopted its annual fees, payable to Councillors for the 2014/2015 financial year at the minimum amount payable for a Category Rural at \$8,130. The fee payable to the Mayor for 2014/2015 was set at \$22,870, the same fee as the previous year. The fees are effective from the 1 July.

Councillors elected to reduce their current fees to the minimum payable and freeze the Mayoral allowance at its current level. This follows the 2014 Federal Budget decision to freeze indexation on Local Government Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years.

## **Tooleybuc Central School – financial support to host a public forum on the drug “ice”**

Council will provide \$250 to Tooleybuc Central School towards the hosting of a public forum about the drug ice. The forum will include an expert from the Pennington Institute and a wide range of local professionals including from the police and community health.

## **Wakool Shire Council draft 2014/2015 draft budget documents**

Following the public consultation period and with no submissions received, Council adopted the 2014/2015 budget and Community Strategic Plan. Council also elected to set aside \$5,000 for ANZAC Day recognition throughout the Shire in 2015.

The budget includes implementation of the accelerated timber bridge replacement program for local roads, with five timber bridges to be completed during the 2014/2015 financial year. There is also \$1.158m for roads and bridge maintenance, \$556,000 for the rural roads resealing program and \$350,000 for gravel re-sheets and formation works.

The Moulamein Hub and Barham Q Centre projects have also been allocated \$50,000 each for scoping and plan preparation.

Council made changes to the draft budget at last month's Ordinary Meeting after the announcement of a freeze on indexation of Local Government Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years.

## **S355 Committees – 2014/2015 Dollar for Dollar Grant Applications**

Council approved all S355 Committee Dollar for Dollar grants applications for the 2014/2015 financial year. The 2014/2015 has provided \$40,000 for funding of dollar for dollar grant projects and another \$10,000 matched on dollar for dollar basis for any unforeseen maintenance needs throughout the year.

Council received four grant applications from Barham, Moulamein and Tooleybuc Management Committees at the total value of \$10,497 (ex GST), of which Council is asked to contribute \$5,248. As per normal practice, any unspent funds at the end of the year will be transferred to reserves for future allocation.

## **Policy – Councillor Expenses and Provision of Facilities**

Council adopted the draft 2014/2015 Councillor Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy, which will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days for comment. The policy's procedures outline the expenses that can be claimed by (or paid on behalf of) Councillors, and the facilities provided by Council to enable Councillors to carry out their civic duties.

## **Engineering operations**

An information report was presented regarding works carried out or planned in the Shire. Some of these works include:

- MR319 Thule and Gonn Street reconstruction is complete. Line marking and landscaping will be completed in due course.
- Murray Constructions are scheduled to start works at Nacurrie Bridge for the installation of bridge piles.
- Traffic counts have been put in place on the Punt Road and Moulamein Road intersection, Lawson Road and Moulamein Road intersection and Moulamein Road.
- A number of roads have been graded around the Shire.
- Disabled parking has been installed in front of the Barham Medical Centre. Works included the pulling up of the pavement which was concreted and installation of a pram crossing.
- Work is progressing on the erosion and retaining wall remediation at Barham by Comdain Infrastructure. Concrete pre-cast panels have been installed and works will start on construction of a timber façade for the front of the panels.
- Town maintenance is taking place across the Shire.
- Sewer junction repairs for the Barham Sewer Relining are continuing.
- The viewing deck over the intake structure for the Barham Boardwalk has been fixed into place.
- Flood Risk Draft Plans have been finalised.

To view the reports presented at the June Ordinary Meeting and the minutes, visit [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au) and click on Council meetings from the Quicklinks menu.

The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, 16 July at 2pm in Moulamein.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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Thursday, 25 September 2014

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR OUTCOMES FROM WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL SEPTEMBER MEETINGS

### **Special Council Meeting**

Cr Neil Gorey was returned as Wakool Shire Council Mayor for the next 12 months and Cr Anthony Jackson was re-elected as Deputy Mayor. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor were elected unopposed.

Following the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Council determined dates for its Ordinary Meetings of Council.

From October 2014 to September 2015 Council will generally meet at 2pm at the following locations:

Moulamein (15 October)	Moulamein (17 June)
Murray Downs (19 November)	Barham (24 June) (Special Council Meeting)
Barham (10 December (9.30am)	Wakool (15 July)
Moulamein (18 February)	Moulamein (19 August)
Tooleybuc (18 March)	Barham (16 September) (Special and Ordinary Council meetings)
Barham (15 April)	
Moulamein (13 May) (Special Council Meeting)	
Moulamein (20 May)	

### **Ordinary Council Meeting**

#### **Murray Darling Association 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

Council will send delegates to attend the Murray Darling Association's 70<sup>th</sup> National Conference in Tumut from the 14 to 16 October. All costs associated with the conference will be met by Council.

#### **Planning proposal – Murray Downs-Swan Hill Bridge**

Council declined the request to undertake a Planning Proposal to amend the Wakool Local Environmental Plan to rezone Lot 1 DP 1134973 from RU1 Primary Production to R5 Large Lot Residential.

Council will investigate funding options to review the existing Wakool Land Use Strategy as it relates to Murray Downs.

#### **RAMROC – Regional Waste Strategy 2014-2020**

Council formally adopted the RAMROC Regional Waste Strategy 2014-2020, and will implement activities associated with the strategy. The strategy provides a unified approach for member Councils across the region to improve waste management, including recycling and resource recovery.

#### **Wakool Shire Council Economic Development Strategy**

Council adopted the final Wakool Shire Council Economic Development Strategy 2014-2017, which sets out actions and outcomes for economic development in the Shire. The draft strategy was previously placed on public exhibition for 28 days with no comments or submissions received.

#### **Stormwater projects tendering**

Council will advertise for Expressions of Interest as part of the selective tendering process for the supply of goods and services for storm water projects in Barham.

The projects include removal, supply and installation of pump stations, electrical installations and connections, concrete and pipe pits, and kerbing and road surface works.

## **Sprayed bituminous surfacing**

Council accepted the tender from Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd for sprayed bituminous surfacing for three years (with the option of a two-year extension), as part of Council's road sealing program.

## **National Local Roads and Transport Congress**

Council will send delegates to the National Local Roads and Transport Congress in Tamworth from 12 to 14 November 2014. All costs will be met by Council.

## **Special Rate Variation – 2015/2016**

Council will begin the application process to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rate Variation to commence from July 2015. Public consultation sessions with ratepayers will also take place, including around proposed percentage increases. Following this consultation process, the application will be submitted to IPART by February 2015.

## **Recruitment and Selection Policy**

Council adopted the draft Recruitment and Selection Policy, which will go on public exhibition for 28 days for comment. The policy applies to the recruitment, selection and appointment of casual, temporary, fixed term and permanent employees (except the General Manager and senior staff identified under the Local Government Act, 1993).

## **Customer Service Policy and Complaints Management Policy**

Council adopted the draft Customer Service Policy, which applies to all requests for service and complaints made by customers in relation to Council's operation.

Council also adopted the draft Complaints Management Policy. The policy sets out effective complaint management within the organisation and applies to all Councillors, Council officers, contractors and volunteers.

The draft Customer Service Policy and Complaints Management Policy are part of the review of the entire customer service/complaints management function of Council.

Both draft policies will go on public exhibition for 28 days for comment.

## **Engineering operations**

Council noted an information report regarding works carried out or planned in the Shire. These works include:

- Pile driving at Nacurrie North Bridge is complete as is the bridge substructure and superstructure frame. The installation of bridge decks is in progress. The bridge is expected to be commissioned by the end of September.
- Bridge pile driving is complete on Marunda Bridge, installation of headstocks is underway.
- Designs for Coolbool Island Bridge are complete.
- A number of roads have been graded around the Shire.
- Shoulder grading is being undertaken in Speewa and Koraleigh areas.
- General road patching is taking place.
- Heavy patching on MR 694 will start in late September.
- MR 94 road reconstruction will commence at the end of September and is anticipated to be finished by the end of November.
- Sewer investigations in Moulamein and Murray Downs are complete. Interflow will provide a maintenance and repair report in due course.
- The renewal of the Barham Sewer Rising Main project is ongoing.
- A tender for the Gravity Stormwater Strategy implementation is being prepared.
- Council has submitted an application to the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development for Bridge Renewal Program funding of \$3.4 million for financial years 2015-2017.

- Council has submitted a grant application to Transport for NSW for a Fixing Country Roads grant for \$800,000.
- Noxious weeds prevention activities have been carried out, including road shoulder spraying. Rabbit control activities have also taken place.

To view the reports presented at the September Special Council Meeting and Ordinary Council Meeting, visit [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au) and click on Council meetings from the Quicklinks menu.

The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, 15 October at 2pm in Moulamein.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Bruce Graham  
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Phone: 03 5887 5007

Wednesday, 15 October 2014

## SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION TO START NEXT MONTH

Wakool Shire Council will hold a series of community consultation sessions from next month regarding a proposed special rate variation in 2015/2016.

Wakool Shire Council General Manager Bruce Graham said Council felt it needed to have a conversation with the community about the proposed special rate variation and the options available.

"The freeze on indexation for Local Government Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years has resulted in a \$2.4 million cumulative impact over the next decade – a five per cent loss of revenue," Mr Graham said.

"This loss will have an effect on our existing service levels, including maintenance of rural roads, parks and gardens, roadsides and the continuation of the timber bridge replacement program. It could also potentially see the loss of some services."

The consultation sessions will present three special rate variation (SRV) scenarios:

### **Scenario 1**

An SRV of 7% in 2015/2016 to maintain existing service levels.

### **Scenario 2**

SRV of 7% in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. This will maintain existing service levels and advance the replacement of three additional timber bridges. It will also negate the need to borrow money for the timber bridge replacement program.

### **Scenario 3**

SRV of 6.67% average for three years starting in 2015/2016. This will provide the same outcomes as Scenario 2, plus the replacement of three additional timber bridges.

The option to not apply for a special rate variation will also be discussed at the consultation sessions.

"This is a scenario we will talk about with the community and how it will affect what people see on the ground in their communities, such as maintenance," Mr Graham said.

The community consultation meeting dates are:

### **Week 1**

- Monday, 24th November – Barham
- Tuesday, 25th November – Wakool
- Wednesday, 26th November – Moulamein

### **Week 2**

- Tuesday, 2nd December – Murray Downs
- Wednesday, 3rd December – Tooleybuc

All meetings start at 5.30pm. Venues will be confirmed shortly.

Following the consultation sessions, a report will be presented to Council at its December meeting, where it will decide whether to continue with the special rate variation process.

If Council elects to continue with the SRV process, an application will be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal by the middle of February. The special rate variation would commence in July 2015.

**ENDS**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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Phone: 03 5887 5007





Thursday, 11 December 2014

## COUNCILS HOLDS SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION SESSIONS

Wakool Shire Council has held a series of community consultation sessions regarding a proposed special rate variation in 2015/2016.

The community meetings were held over two weeks in Barham, Wakool, Moulamein, Murray Downs and Tooleybuc.

Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey said more than 130 community members attended the sessions.

“The sessions included a detailed presentation on the special rate variation options being considered by Council. This was then followed by a discussion with the community, who expressed their views regarding the options,” Cr Gorey said.

“We thank everyone who attended the sessions during the past two weeks and who provided their thoughts during these meetings.”

Council is also welcoming submissions from the community regarding the proposed special rate variation. Submissions will be considered at a Special Council Meeting on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

Community members who would like to make a submission can do so by writing to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein 2733.

If Council elects to continue with the special rate variation process, an application will be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal by the middle of February. The special rate variation would commence in July 2015.

The community presentation and comprehensive background information regarding the proposed special rate variation is available from Council’s website at [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au)

**ENDS**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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Thursday, 22 January 2015

## WAKOOL SHIRE CONSIDERS SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Wakool Shire Council will make application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a special rate variation of 7% (inclusive of rate pegging) for 2015/2016.

The application to IPART follows a Special Council Meeting on the 21 January where councillors considered a special rate variation and various options.

Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey said the special rate variation was in response to the freezing of indexation for Financial Assistance Grants over the next three years.

“Unfortunately, this freeze meant a loss of income for Council, which then affects the ability of the organisation to continue its service levels, including maintaining roads,” Cr Gorey said.

He added that the proposed special rate variation would only meet existing service levels and infrastructure to some degree.

“If the application to IPART is successful, the 7% special rate variation for 2015/2016 will only maintain Council’s existing service levels, there will still be a need to look at efficiencies across the organisation,” he said.

“This will include a review of Council operations across the board, including the areas of engineering, finance administration and organisational development.”

Cr Gorey said the special rate variation was also setting the scene for the NSW Government’s Fit for the Future package, released following the Independent Local Government Review Panel’s recommendations.

“As a Council, providing services to our communities and ensuring that our communities are represented is essential. We need to ensure that Council is in a good position throughout the Fit for the Future process, including pursuing Council’s preferred option of becoming a Rural Council.”

Community meetings regarding the special rate variation and its options were held late last year in Barham, Wakool, Moulamein, Murray Downs and Tooleybuc. More than 130 community members attended the sessions.

Council will make application to IPART for the special rate variation by the middle of February and expects a response to its application by the end of March.

If the application is successful, the 7% special rate variation would commence in July 2015.

**ENDS**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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Wakool Shire Council  
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Bruce Graham  
General Manager  
Wakool Shire Council  
Phone: 03 5887 5007

Tuesday, 10 February 2015

## **SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPLICATION TO IPART ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR RATEPAYERS**

Wakool Shire Council at its January 2015 Special Meeting resolved to make application for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 7% (inclusive of 2.40% rate peg amount) on ordinary rates to IPART.

The additional 4.60% (above the 2.40% rate peg amount) being sought will generate an additional \$186,000 in 2015/2016 rating year and remain permanently.

SRV application must be submitted to IPART by 16 February 2015. IPART will accept and consider submissions from ratepayers and individual groups regarding the SRV up till four (4) weeks after the application deadline i.e. to 16 March 2015. Further information can be found on IPART's website [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)

In tables below will show the dollar impacts on minimum and average rates per rating sub-category.

<b>Minimum Ratepayer</b>			
<b>Rate Sub-Categories</b>	<b>2014/2015 Minimum Rates</b>	<b>2015/2016 Minimum Rates</b>	<b>Additional per annum</b>
Farmland - Dry	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Farmland - Irrigable	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Farmland - Intensive Farming Feedlots	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Urban Residential	\$400.00	\$428.00	\$28.00
Rural Residential	\$510.00	\$546.00	\$36.00
Business	\$420.00	\$450.00	\$30.00
Marina Moorings - Murray Downs	\$502.00	\$537.00	\$35.00
Large Grain Sheds - Moulamein	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Large Grain Sheds - Burraboi	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Barham	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Moulamein	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Tooleybuc	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Murray Downs	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Koraleigh	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Burraboi	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Transport Depots - Murray Downs	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00

<b>Average Ratepayer</b>				
<b>Rate Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>Additional per annum</b>
Farmland - Dry	216	\$2,507.96	\$2,703.24	\$195.28
Farmland - Irrigable	704	\$3,253.85	\$3,475.29	\$221.44
Farmland - Intensive Farming Feedlots	3	\$10,177.04	\$10,887.75	\$710.71
Urban Residential	1,059	\$488.38	\$522.98	\$34.60
Rural Residential	588	\$694.14	\$741.87	\$47.73
Business	246	\$749.89	\$800.18	\$50.29
Marina Moorings - Murray Downs	9	\$604.88	\$646.59	\$41.71
Large Grain Sheds - Moulamein	3	\$9,271.70	\$9,919.18	\$647.48
Large Grain Sheds - Burraboi	2	\$3,719.30	\$3,979.03	\$259.73
Small Grain Sheds - Barham	1	\$4,994.79	\$5,343.61	\$348.82
Small Grain Sheds - Moulamein	1	\$867.15	\$927.71	\$60.56
Small Grain Sheds - Tooleybuc	2	\$797.78	\$853.49	\$55.71
Small Grain Sheds - Murray Downs	3	\$3,989.25	\$4,267.84	\$278.59
Small Grain Sheds - Koraleigh	1	\$693.72	\$742.16	\$48.44
Small Grain Sheds - Burraboi	1	\$1,033.23	\$1,105.38	\$72.15
Transport Depots - Murray Downs	1	\$3,566.37	\$3,815.42	\$249.05

**ENDS**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Bruce Graham  
General Manager, Wakool Shire Council,  
Phone: 03 5887 5007

# Wakool Shire Council to pursue Rural Council option

Wakool Shire Council has resolved to pursue the option to become a Rural Council, following the Independent Local Government Review Panel's recommendations and subsequent Fit for the Future package.

The resolution, which was made at Council's October meeting, would see the Wakool Shire Council work with other similar sized councils within the Mid-Murray Group.

Wakool Shire Council General Manager, Bruce Graham said Council was opposed to mergers, but would be willing

to discuss Rural Councils and Joint Organisations.

"Council considered two important principles in its response to the Fit for the Future package – services to its communities and community representation," Mr Graham said.

"While the formation of a Rural Council will mean changes to services and operations to ensure efficiency and performance, Council remains strongly committed to ensuring residents and ratepayers receive acceptable levels of service.

"The package's alternative

proposal is for Wakool Shire Council to consider merging with Deniliquin, Conargo and Murray Shire Councils – forming a Regional Council centred in Deniliquin. This is not Council's preferred option."

Mr Graham added that Council would also seek the community's feedback regarding the options outlined in the Fit for the Future package.

"We would like to hear from our community about the option of Wakool becoming a Rural Council or the alternative of becoming a Regional Council and merging with Deniliquin,

Conargo and Murray," he said.

"It's important that residents are aware of all the options outlined within the Fit for the Future package, what it potentially means for services and provide their feedback around this."

Feedback should be addressed to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council. It can be sent to mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au or Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733.

Councils will assess their current position and submit a Fit for the Future proposal by 30th June 2015.

The Bridge 13-11-14



## PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Starting Monday 24 November, Council will hold a series of community consultation sessions throughout the Shire regarding a proposed special rate variation in 2015/2016.

Community consultation sessions will be held as follows:

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Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 5.30pm	TOOLEYBUC	Tooleybuc Sporting Club

Bruce Graham  
GENERAL MANAGER

The Bridge 13-11-14



## NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the **NOVEMBER ORDINARY MEETING** of the **WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL**, will be held in the Conference Room at Murray Downs Resort, **ON WEDNESDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2014** commencing at 10.00am.

Bruce Graham  
General Manager

The Bridge 13-11-14



## MINOR WORKS & SERVICES TENDER TENDER NO C2014/2015-003

Wakool Shire Council invites tenders for  
a contract to provide services for **KERB &  
GUTTER – FOOTPATH REPLACEMENT  
PROJECT**

Tender documents may be obtained by contacting Craig Maffescioni on 03 5887 5007 or by collecting the documentation from the Wakool Shire Council Office, Tualka Tce Moulamein.

Requests for information regarding the proposed contract to be directed to Craig Maffescioni on 03 5887 5007 or email: mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au

Tenders close on 28 November 2014 at 4:00pm

Tenders must be lodged by either of the following methods:

- In Person at Wakool Shire Council Office, Moulamein
- By Post to Wakool Shire Council Private Bag 40 Moulamein NSW 2733
- By Email to mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au

All tenders will be opened at closing time and will be considered by Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. Canvassing of any Council members or officers will disqualify tenderers from the tender process.

BRUCE GRAHAM  
GENERAL MANAGER

The Pastoral Times  
14-11-14

**WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL**

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS  
SPECIAL RATE VARIATION**

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**Bruce Graham  
GENERAL MANAGER**

The Guardian  
14-11-14

**WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL**

**MINOR WORKS & SERVICES TENDER**

TENDER NO C2014/2015-003

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- In Person at Wakool Shire Council Office, Moulamein
- By post to Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein, NSW, 2733.
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**Bruce Graham  
GENERAL MANAGER**

The Guardian  
14-11-14

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**BRUCE GRAHAM  
GENERAL MANAGER**

The Guardian  
14-11-14

**WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL**

**POSITION VACANT:**

**Maintenance Manager - North**

The Maintenance Manager - North will assist in the supervision and coordination of the maintenance and operation of infrastructure to deliver the works program in conjunction with other members of the works team. This includes the supervision and coordination of employees, contractors, plant and resources. The position is graded as Grade 13 in Council's salary system which ranges from \$1209.30 to \$1354.42 per week, depending on skills and experience. This position is based in Moulamein.

Enquires can be directed to Onesimo Mukodi, Deputy Director Engineering Services (03) 5887 5007.

**To Apply**

Prospective applicants may obtain a copy of the Position Description which includes the selection criteria by contacting the Moulamein Office on 03 5887 5007 or on Council's website [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au).

Applications addressing the selection criteria close Wednesday 19th November 2014 at 5 pm and should be addressed to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733 or [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au).





#### POSITION VACANT

#### Administration Officer - Engineering Services

The Administration Officer - Engineering Services will provide administrative support to the Engineering Services Department including preparing correspondence and reports, maintaining registers, providing customer service, entering data, assisting in vehicle registrations, maintaining council's Complaints register and answering phones. There will also be the opportunity to assist with surveys, inspections and data collection. The position is graded as Grade 5 to Grade 9a in Council's salary system which ranges from \$804.60 to \$920.85 per week, depending on skills and experience. This position is permanent full time and is based in Moulamein.

Enquires can be directed to Brian Ebery, Director Engineering Services on (03) 5887 5007.

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The  
Guardian  
14-11-14.

BARHAM.

BRIDGE - Thursday, November 20, 2014 - PAGE 3



WAKOOL  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL  
*naturally*



### Wakool Shire Council supporting our local businesses

McMayor Day is this Saturday, 22nd November!

Come along to the following locations throughout the morning to see Mayor Neil Gorey working hard in a variety of local businesses:

9am to 10 - Barham Newsagency  
10am to 11am - Caltex Barham  
11am to 12noon - Barham Foodworks  
12noon to 1pm - Barham Hotel

Mayor Gorey will be out and about once again on Saturday, 29th November. Stay tuned for those details!

### Situations Vacant



WAKOOL  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL  
*naturally*

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Barham Bridge  
20/11/14

### Public Notice



WAKOOL  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL

Barham  
Bridge  
20/11/14

#### PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

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Bruce Graham  
GENERAL MANAGER

Wong 18/11/14



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS  
SPECIAL RATE VARIATION**

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Bruce Graham  
GENERAL MANAGER



# PUBLIC NOTICES

Postcard  
Times  
21/11/14



## PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSIONS SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

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Bruce Graham  
GENERAL MANAGER



## Administration Officer - Engineering Services

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### To Apply

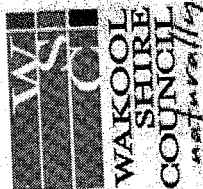
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# McMAYOR

BARHAM

BRIDGE DAY 27/11/14



him early, and there was plenty of good natured banter.

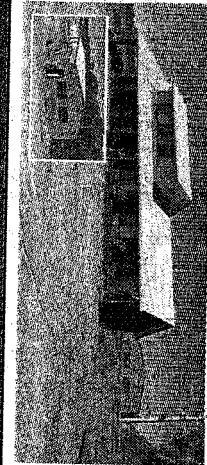
Cr Gorey said the whole morning was a fantastic experience, with each business bringing very different to the next. He enjoyed talking to different customers and working with local traders.

Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey certainly turned heads on Saturday morning, 22nd November as he worked alongside local businesses as a part of the Shop Small campaign.

Cr Gorey started the morning off with Rock Reaper at the Barham

He also urged locals

Bernard M Ryan & Co



"Five Flags"  
85 View Street, Koondrook  
Saturday 29th November 2014 On Site - 11am.  
Brick home two storey, 5 B/R. Large shed.  
Land area: 2ha Water: 0.1 Delivery share.

# WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:**  
DA 99/14 Installation of Irrigation Pump Site  
on Murray River

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:**  
Lot 13 DP7858331 - Felton Drive,  
Parish of Yellymong

**APPLICANT:**  
JS Gouin

**CONSENT AUTHORITY:**  
Council of the Shire of Wakool

Council is in receipt of an application to undertake the above development work within the Shire of Wakool and any person wishing to lodge a submission in relation to the above proposal may do so in writing, to reach the undersigned by 4pm on Friday, 19 December 2014.

General Manager  
Shire of Wakool  
Private Bag 40  
MOULAMEIN NSW 2733

Any submissions, which are by way of an objection to the development proposal, must clearly state the reasons for the objection. Details of any submissions, including identifying particulars, may be made public. The provisions of the GIPA Act may, after due process, result in submissions marked confidential by the writer, being released to an applicant.

Details of the development are on public exhibition at Council's Barham Branch Office, 15 Murray Street, Barham, during normal office hours, 9am to 5pm.

Persons requiring further details on the development proposal are requested to contact Council's Barham Office on (03) 5453 3200.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

## PUBLIC NOTICES

Guardian 21-11-14

# WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL

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**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

# WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL

## POSITION VACANT

### Administration Officer - Engineering Services

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# Land use rules change

NORTHERN TIMES 21/11/14



CR GOREY

RURAL land owners of vacant land under 500 hectares defined as "existing holding" under the current Wakool Local Environmental Plan will no longer be able to apply for building permission as of December 31.

Wakool Shire Council mayor, Cr Neil Gorey said rural land owners wanting to build on these existing holdings vacant blocks needed to lodge a development application with Council before the end of the year.

"If development approval is granted, applicants then have five years to physically commence work on their developments," Cr Gorey said.

The ability to build on existing holding lots was originally provided under the Wakool Interim Development Order in 1977 as a savings provision, preserved under the Wakool Local Environmental Plan 1992.

The changes to development of existing holdings have been introduced through the Wakool Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013.

The Wakool LEP 2013 included a deadline on when applications to build on existing holdings could be made, in order to minimise unplanned rural residential development.

Anyone who would like to discuss the matter with council's planning staff should call the council's development services department on 03 5453 3200 or e-mail [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au).

Development service staff are also available by appointment at council's Barham and Moulamein offices between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.



### Tip and Transfer Station Closures - Christmas Period

Residents are advised that the Barham Transfer Station will be closed on Thursday 25th December 2014 and Thursday 1st January 2015.

The tips at Goodnight, Moulamein, Koraleigh and Wakool have no closures.

Normal operating hours will continue on all other scheduled days during the Christmas and New Year period.

For further information, contact Wakool Shire's Barham Branch Office on 03 5453 3200 during business hours.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

The  
Bridge

18-12-14



### SPECIAL RATE VARIATION SUBMISSIONS

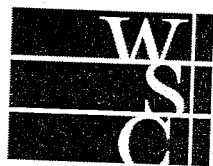
Wakool Shire Council has held a series of community consultation sessions regarding a proposed special rate variation in 2015/2016.

The community presentation and comprehensive background information regarding the proposed special rate variation is available from Council's website at [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au) or by phoning the Moulamein Office on 03 5887 5007.

Council is welcoming submissions from the community regarding the proposed special rate variation. Submissions will be considered at a Special Council Meeting on Wednesday 21st January 2015.

Community members who would like to make a submission can do so by writing to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733. Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 14th January 2015.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
PRIVATE BAG 40  
MOULAMEIN NSW 2733



### POSITION VACANT:

#### Maintenance Manager - North

**WAKOOL  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**  
*naturally*

The Maintenance Manager - North will assist in the supervision and coordination of the maintenance and operation of infrastructure to deliver the works program in conjunction with other members of the works team. This includes the supervision and coordination of employees, contractors, plant and resources. The position is graded as Grade 13 in Council's salary system which ranges from \$1209.30 to \$1354.42 per week, depending on skills and experience. This position is based in Moulamein.

Enquires can be directed to Onesimo Mukodi, Deputy Director Engineering Services (03) 5887 5007

#### To Apply

Prospective applicants may obtain a copy of the Position Description which includes the selection criteria by contacting the Moulamein Office on 03 5887 5007 or on Council's website [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au).

Applications addressing the selection criteria close Friday 16th January 2015 at 5 pm and should be addressed to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733 or [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au).

The Bridge

18-12-14.

Northern times  
The Bridge  
18-12-14



### SPECIAL RATE VARIATION SUBMISSIONS

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Community members who would like to make a submission can do so by writing to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733. Submissions close at 5pm on Wednesday, January 14, 2015.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
PRIVATE BAG 40  
MOULAMEIN NSW 2733



### Administration and Customer Service Officer

The Administration and Customer Service Officer provides administrative support to Council from the Barham branch office, including clerical, development and rating enquiries, receptionist and receipting, V-Line and RMS services. The position is graded as Grade 5, Band 1, and Level 3 in Council's salary system which ranges from \$804.60 to \$901.15 per week, depending on skills and experience. This position is based in Barham.

Enquires can be directed to Jenny Brennan, Senior Administration Officer on (03) 5453 3200.

#### To Apply

Prospective applicants may obtain a copy of the Position Description which includes the selection criteria by contacting the Moulamein Office on 03 5887 5007 or on Council's website [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au)

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The Guardian

19-12-14

A C



### MAINTENANCE MANAGER — NORTH

The Maintenance Manager - North will assist in the supervision and coordination of the maintenance and operation of infrastructure to deliver the works program in conjunction with other members of the works team. This includes the supervision and coordination of employees, contractors, plant and resources. The position is graded as Grade 13 in Council's salary system which ranges from \$1209.30 to \$1354.42 per week, depending on skills and experience. This position is based in Moulamein.

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### Wakool Shire Council

### AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS

26th January 2015

Council would like to congratulate the Wakool Shire 2014 Citizenship Award recipients and all other nominees.

Recipients of Wakool Shire Council 2014 Citizenship Awards are:

**Citizen of the Year** – Ian & Rae James, Moulamein

**Sportsperson of the Year** – Emma Berg, Koraleigh

**Sporting Achievement of the Year** – Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Reserves Premiership Team

**Community Event of the Year** – Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Fishing Competition

The Wakool Shire Council Australia Day Ambassador for 2015 is Ron Delezio, Co-Founder & Co-Director of Day of Difference Foundation. Presentations will be made to all award recipients at Australia Day Breakfasts held across the Shire.

**Barham** – Breakfast at Riverside Park starting at 7.00am finishing at 8.45am followed by the flag raising ceremony.

**Moulamein** – Breakfast at the Triangle at 8.30am followed by the flag raising ceremony at 9.00am.

**Wakool** – Breakfast at the Wakool Hall starting at 8.00am. Please book through the Wakool Café 03) 5887 1217 for catering purposes.

**Tooleybuc** – Breakfast is from 7.30am at Mensforth Park followed by the flag raising ceremony. The duck race will follow at the Murray River. A donation would be appreciated.

**Koraleigh** – Breakfast is from 7.30am onwards at the Koraleigh Recreation Reserve followed by the raising of the flag ceremony at 8.30am.

The 2015 Ambassador Program is proudly supported by Woolworths.

**Australia Day – Celebrate What's Great**

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

PASTORAL TIMES

19-12-14

A C



### SPECIAL RATE VARIATION SUBMISSIONS

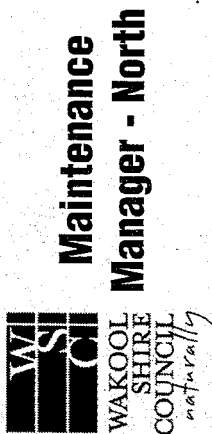
Wakool Shire Council has held a series of community consultation sessions regarding a proposed special rate variation in 2015/2016.

The community presentation and comprehensive background information regarding the proposed special rate variation is available from Council's website at [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au) or by phoning the Moulamein Office on (03) 5887 5007.

Council is welcoming submissions from the community regarding the proposed special rate variation. Submissions will be considered at a Special Council Meeting on Wednesday 21st January 2015.

Community members who would like to make a submission can do so by writing to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733. Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 14th January 2015.

**Bruce Graham**  
General Manager



### Maintenance Manager - North

The Maintenance Manager – North will assist in the supervision and coordination of the maintenance and operation of infrastructure to deliver the works program in conjunction with other members of the works team. This includes the supervision and coordination of employees, contractors, plant and resources. The position is graded as Grade 13 in Council's salary system which ranges from \$1209.30 to \$1354.42 per week, depending on skills and experience. This position is based in Moulamein.

Enquires can be directed to Onesimo Mukodi, Deputy Director Engineering Services (03) 5887 5007

#### To Apply

Prospective applicants may obtain a copy of the Position Description which includes the selection criteria by contacting the Moulamein Office on 03 5887 5007 or on Council's website [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au).

Applications addressing the selection criteria close Friday 16th January 2015 at 5 pm and should be addressed to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733 or mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au.

on 19/12/14





### SPECIAL RATE VARIATION SUBMISSIONS

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**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
PRIVATE BAG 40  
MOULAMEIN NSW 2733

The  
Guardian  
19-12-14



### Australia Day Celebrations 26th January 2015

Council would like to congratulate the Wakool Shire 2014 Citizenship Award recipients and all other nominees.

Recipients of Wakool Shire Council 2014 Citizenship Awards are:

**Citizen of the Year:** Ian and Rae James Moulamein

**Sportsperson of the Year:** Emma Berg, Koraleigh

**Sporting Achievement of the Year:** Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Reserves Premiership Team

**Community Event of the Year:** Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Fishing Competition

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*The 2015 Ambassador Program  
is proudly supported by Woolworths  
Australia Day - Celebrate What's Great*

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

The  
Guardian  
19-12-14



### WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL OFFICE CLOSURES 2014/15

- **Moulamein Council Office** will be closed to the public for the Christmas break from 12.30pm on Wednesday 24th December 2014 and reopen on Monday 5th January 2015.

- **Barham Council Office** will be closed to the public for the Christmas break from 12.30 pm on Wednesday 24th December 2014 and will resume normal hours on Monday 5th January 2015 with the exception of Tuesday 30th December 2014 and Friday 2nd January 2015 when it will be open from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm for RMS and V-line transactions.

- **Moulamein Business Centre** will be closed for the Christmas Break from 1.00 pm on Wednesday 24th December 2014 and resume normal hours on Monday 5th January 2015 with the exception of Tuesday 30th December 2014 and Friday 2nd January 2015 where it will be open its normal hours.

- **Moulamein Library** will be closed for the Christmas break from 6.30pm Tuesday 23rd December 2014 and will resume normal hours as of Tuesday 6th January 2015.

- **Barham Library** will be closed for the Christmas Break from 5.00 pm on Tuesday 23rd December 2014 and will resume normal hours as of Tuesday 6th January 2015.

- **Tooleybuc, Moulamein and Barham HACC offices** will be closed for the Christmas break from 12.30 pm on Wednesday 24th December 2014 re-open on Monday 5th January 2015.

- **Barham and Moulamein Depots** will be closed for the Christmas break from 5.00 pm on Thursday 18th December 2014 and re-open on Tuesday 6th January 2015.

Emergency and routine staff will be available for work through this period. For further information please phone 03 5887 5007 to connect to our voice recorded message.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

The Guardian  
19-12-14



### TIP AND TRANSFER STATION CLOSURES Christmas Period

Residents are advised that the **Barham Transfer Station** will be closed on Thursday, December 25, 2014 and Thursday, January 1, 2015.

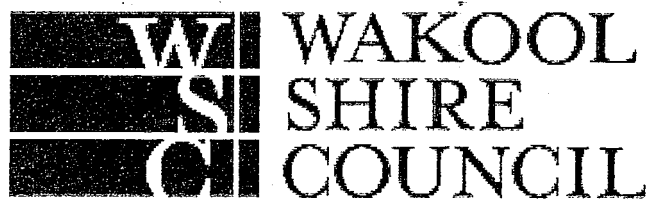
The tips at **Goodnight, Moulamein, Koraleigh and Wakool** have no closures.

Normal operating hours will continue on all other scheduled days during the Christmas and New Year period.

For further information contact Wakool Shire's Barham Branch Office on (03) 5453 3200 during business hours.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
GENERAL MANAGER

The Guardian  
19-12-14



WONGI  
16.12.14

### SPECIAL RATE VARIATION SUBMISSIONS

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Council is welcoming submissions from the community regarding the proposed special rate variation. Submissions will be considered at a Special Council Meeting on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

Community members who would like to make a submission can do so by writing to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council, Private Bag 40, Moulamein NSW 2733. Submissions close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

**BRUCE GRAHAM**  
**GENERAL MANAGER**  
**PRIVATE BAG 40**  
**MOULAMEIN NSW 2733**



### NOTICE OF MEETING

**NOTICE** is hereby given that a **SPECIAL MEETING** of the **WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL**, will be held **WEDNESDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2015**, in the Riverside Reception Centre, Murray Street **BARHAM**, commencing at **2.00pm**. The purpose of this meeting is to consider the proposed **SPECIAL RATE VARIATION**.

**Bruce Graham**  
**General Manager**

# 12/2/14 Wakool divided over rate increase

NIKI BURNSIDE

*Guardian*

RESIDENTS of Wakool Shire Council are divided on whether to allow for a rate increase of seven or 20 per cent, or to discontinue basic services.

About 130 people attended the meetings where a proposed special rate variation was discussed in detail.

Among the options put to residents was a rate increase of 20 per cent over three years, a seven per cent increase for 2014/15 or no increase at all.

Without a rate increase, Wakool Shire Council may be forced to reduce services including road maintenance and cut council staff in the coming years.

Mayor Neil Gorey said he had noticed rural residents were more inclined towards a rate increase while those living in urban areas were more likely to vote on no increase at all.

But he said there was discussion at each meeting.

The major concern in Wakool is loss of population and economic development... and a loss of water through the

water buybacks," he said.

Barham business owner Gary Mansfield said he was against a rate increase.

"No one wants to see them go up," Mr Mansfield said. "I'd rather they stay as they are as they are fairly high anyway."

Asked if he would mind a loss of services, Mr Mansfield said "they didn't have any anyway."

"We don't get nearly as many grants as other shires," he said.

"If you look at Gannawarra Shire — how many grants and things do they get compared to us?"

*The Guardian* approached other residents for comment, but some declined in a bid to maintain a positive relationship with Wakool Shire Council.

Mayor Gorey said they were welcoming submissions regarding the proposed special rate variation.

Submissions will be considered at a Special Council Meeting on Wednesday, January 21 2015.

If council elects to continue, the special rate variation would commence in July 2015.



**TALENTED:** Balranald resident Connie Rasmussen enjoys a number of different arts and crafts activities. Each year, she enters her creations into competitions at the Swan Hill Show.

## Businesses in battle of the pumpkin scones

XANA BITTAR

THOSE who love a bit of competition amon the workplace have been encouraged to enter this year's Business House Cookery Challenge at the Swan Hill Show.

In the past, businesses across the region have entered the competition with each year having a different theme.

This year, businesses are invited to enter their home made pumpkin scones.

Balranald resident Connie Rasmussen works at the local Café Cassaro, owned by her sister.

The two, along with Connie's nephew, enter the competition each year, but put their own twist on it.

Rather than baking one batch together, they enter the competition individually.

Connie said this made things "very exciting" around the work place in the lead up to the competition.

"It's like a side-line competition for us as well," she said.

She encouraged other businesses to get involved and do the same.

"It adds a bit of interest in the workplace. There has been a bit of banter here, we are all talking

about it saying 'who is going win?' — it just adds more excitement about going to work."

Over the past few years, Café Cassaro has come second in the competition. It was Connie's nephew who took the second place ribbon in last year's red velvet challenge.

"It gives you some bragging rights for 12 months in business," Connie laughed.

"Then you can enter it again the next year and someone else might get the bragging rights."

"We've been pretty lucky to have come second a few times now, we will see what happens this year."

Connie said she looked forward to entering again this year and had been practicing over the past few weeks.

"My husband has been my critic, he is so over pumpkin scones now," she said.

"When I'm not at work I'll be thinking about the recipe, what I should try this time round."

In previous years the show has provided a recipe for entrants to follow, however this year they will be required to create their own.

Entries close this Friday, September 26.

## Community consultation

XANA BITTAR

WAKOOL Shire Council will prepare a report and consult with residents about a possible rate increase to start in July next year.

The report will outline different options to compensate some of the loss of revenue following the Federal Government's decision to freeze indexation of local government Financial Assistance Grants

for three years.

The rate increase will allow council to maintain expenditure on services and operations within the shire.

Wakool Shire Council general manager Bruce Graham said council would put the options to the community over the next month.

He said he believed council had a "duty of care" to consult with the community and tell residents what was going on.

"[Residents] might be happy to pay the extra and not have services cut," he said.

"It potentially can go either way."

"We will look at a range of different communication methods, including having information packs online as well as community meetings."

He said if the community refused the rate increase, council would then have no choice but to cut services.

The consultation process follows a requirement for New South Wales local governments to consult with its residents about a possible rate increase rather than, and prior to, cutting services.

Council will need to come to a decision and put in an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal no later than February 2015.

Available now from your local optometrists:

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Eyewear Eyecare

Swan Hill Optical  
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Ph: (03) 5033 1424  
Fax: (03) 5033 1949  
Email: reception@swanhilloptical.com.au

**KERANG OPTICAL**  
Eyewear Eyecare

Kerang Optical  
67A Victoria St, Kerang, Vic, 3579  
Ph: (03) 5450 3000  
Fax: (03) 5450 3013  
Email: reception@kerangoptical.com.au

## PERMANENT WATER SAVING RULES

## Watering Times



**PERMANENT WATER SAVING RULES**

WATERING SYSTEMS CAN BE USED 6.00pm - 10.00am

On Any Day

For further information please visit [lmw.vic.gov.au](http://lmw.vic.gov.au) or telephone 03 5051 3400

[@lowmurwater](https://twitter.com/lowmurwater) [/lowmurraywater](https://facebook.com/lowmurraywater)

LOWER MURRAY  
WATER



# Rates debate

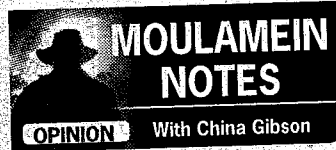
Guardian 5-12-14

WAKOOL  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL

## NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the **DECEMBER ORDINARY MEETING** of the **WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL**, will be held in the Riverside Reception Centre, Murray Street, **B.A.R.H.A.M., ON WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2014** commencing at 2pm.

**Bruce Graham**  
General Manager



THE Wakool Shire meeting to explain their new rates proposal was attended by 60 or more members of the Moulamein district.

Shire staff explained what they had to do and why they had to put the rates up.

The proposal to put the rates up by 20 per cent over three years didn't get any votes.

To go up by 14 per cent over two years got one vote.

To rise by seven per cent for one year and keep the shire doing what it does now without going into debt got a few votes.

To put the rates up by the standard three per cent and drop off shire services got the majority of votes.

None of us like rate increases, but if we want the shire to do what they do now someone has to pay for it.

So if you voted for no increase, your nature strip does not get mown, your potholes do not get fixed and your road does not get graded.

The first staff that goes is the outdoor staff. They will probably have to put another staff member in the office to answer all of the complaints.

## House destroyed by storm

I DO not know at the time of

all the best.

## Germans have landed

SEVENTY years ago this headline would have sent the district into a panic.

I was coming in the Deniliquin Road on Friday evening when I noticed a bloke on a parachute drop out of the sky into a back road of the Moulamein township.

I thought I had better check this out as you do not see that very often in our town.

He was surprised that I was concerned for him and asked where he was. After I did that he asked how far that was from Deniliquin as that was where he took off from.

It was a Friday evening and I just happened to have a cold beer in the ute so I offered him one.

He was very impressed as the tradition with paragliding is that you have a landing beer. I would hate to be the one to break traditions so we had a beer together.

He was a German fellow called Rob.

He said that it would take about an hour to pack his gear up. So I wished him all the best and left him to it.

## Races next Saturday

WITH harvest coming to an early end this year, the 136th Moulamein Races will be the place to be next Saturday.

Our races are very similar to the Birdsville Races except you do not have to travel thousands of kilometres to see them.

When you come through the

ringing the Wakool Shire office lately to report fires.

This is a waste of time — all the shire can do is ring me.

Meanwhile, a tree was left smouldering after a burn off by a local farmer last week and escaped after the wind got up.

This is a very serious offence and the white shirts were not happy.

The maximum fine for letting a fire escape from a burn off on a total fire ban is \$100,000.

On top of that you have no insurance. So if you burn your crops out or your neighbor's crop, you are on your own.

We all get a bit slack at times but to leave a tree burning on a day like that is just not on.

We have all got better things to do than fight a fire due to stupidity. We all have to lift our game as the consequences could be catastrophic.

## Filling the lake

WE HAVE started to fill our town lake.

We leave the filling process as late as possible every year to try and beat the weeds.

If anyone has a solution to

weeds growing through two meters of water we would like to hear it.

Also, if anyone has any information as to who left the mess up at our lake last weekend we would like to know more.

We would all like to thank Fiona and her family for cleaning up what should have been put in the empty bins by the slobbs that enjoyed our facilities.

## No increase in allocation


IT WAS announced this week that there would be no allocation increase in the Murray or the Murrumbidgee river systems.

This leaves the Murray on 45% of allocation and the Murrumbidgee on 40%. At this time of the year it would take a couple of freak storms to boost our allocation on either system.

## River Levels

THE Edward is still rising slowly at just over 2.4 metres and just over 2500 megalitres a day. The Edward should remain close to this level for cod opening.





# WAKOOL SHIRE CONSIDERS SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Wakool Shire Council will make application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a special rate variation of 7% (inclusive of rate pegging) for 2015/2016.

The application to IPART follows a Special Council Meeting on the 21st January, where councillors considered a special rate variation and various options.

Wakool Shire Council Mayor, Neil Gorey said the special rate variation

was in response to the freezing of indexation for Financial Assistance Grants over the next three years.

"Unfortunately, this freeze meant a loss of income for Council, which then affects the ability of the organisation to continue its service levels, including maintaining roads," Cr Gorey said.

He added that the proposed special rate variation would only meet existing service levels and infrastructure to some

degree.

"If the application to IPART is successful, the 7% special rate variation for 2015/2016 will only maintain Council's existing service levels, there will still be a need to look at efficiencies across the organisation," he said.

"This will include a review of Council operations across the board, including the areas of engineering, finance administration and organisational development."

Cr Gorey said the special rate variation was also setting the scene for the NSW Government's Fit for the Future package, released following the Independent Local Government Review Panel's recommendations.

"As a Council, providing services to our communities and ensuring that our communities are represented is essential. We need to ensure that Council is in a good position throughout the Fit for the Future process, including pursuing Council's preferred option of becoming a Rural Council."

Community meetings regarding the special rate variation and its options were held late last year in Barham, Wakool, Moulamein, Murray Downs and Tooleybuc. More than 130 community members attended the sessions.

Council will make application to IPART for the special rate variation by the middle of February and expects a response to its application by the end of March.

If the application is successful, the 7% special rate variation would commence in July 2015.

*The Bridge*  
*29-1-15*

# Wakool 7% rate rise decided

Wakool Shire Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a special rate variation of seven per cent, including the 3.4 per cent rate peg, for 2015/2016.

The application to IPART follows a series of consultation meetings, followed by a special council meeting on January 21.

Wakool Shire Mayor Neil Gorey said the special rate variation was in response to the federal government's freezing of indexation for Financial Assistance Grants over the next three years.

"Unfortunately, this freeze meant a loss of income for council which then affects the ability of the organisation to continue its ser-

vice levels, including maintaining roads," he said.

Cr Gorey said the proposed special rate variation would only cover the gap left by the loss of indexation "to some degree".

"If the application to IPART is successful, the seven per cent special rate variation for 2015/2016 will only maintain council's existing service levels, there will still be a need to look at efficiencies across the organisation," he said.

This will include a review of council operations across the board, including the areas of engineering, finance administration and organisational development."

Cr Gorey said the special rate variation was

also setting the scene for the NSW Government's Fit for the Future package, released following the Independent Local Government Review Panel's recommendations.

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Community meetings regarding the special rate variation and its options were held late last year in Barham, Wakool, Moulamein, Murray Downs and

Tooleybuc. More than 130 community members attended.

Other rate variation options discussed included a seven per cent rate increase in 2015/16 and 2016/17, which would maintain existing service levels and advance the replacement of three additional timber bridges, and a 6.67 per cent increase over three years from 2015/16.

Council will send its application to IPART by the middle of this month and expects a response by the end of March.

Wakool Shire Council estimates the FAG indexation freeze will have a \$2.4 million cumulative impact over the next decade, or a five per cent loss of revenue.



# MADIGAN RALLIES LOCALS OVER MDBP MISERY

More than 120 irrigators, land-holders and small business people attended a public meeting in Barham last Wednesday evening (4th February), with speaker after speaker saying the Murray Darling Basin Plan was killing their region.

In a passionate and often angry series of speeches, locals expressed frustration and dismay at recent comments by the new Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, Bob Baldwin.

Mr Baldwin has said he would not listen to broad rhetoric, asking for specifics.

But grower after grower told independent Senator for Victoria, John Madigan, who organised the meeting, that they had spent the last two

years providing specific details of the impact of the MDBP on their properties.

"There's a disconnect here between what we have been telling the bureaucrats and what the bureaucrats tell the politicians," one speaker said.

"The Murray Darling Basin Authority is a gravy train for snouts in the trough - and it's killing our region, killing our livelihoods and decimating Australia's food bowl."

Another speaker urged the audience to take their frustration to the ballot box.

"We keep voting people in year after year but until this area becomes a marginal seat, they will keep taking us for granted," he said.

"Unless the communities polarise themselves, get behind John Madigan and force Canberra to relook at this... you can say goodbye to this region."

"I don't know what the future holds."

Senator Madigan said he was holding a series of meetings in the region to hear first-hand the impact of the Plan.

"You can't rely on the bureaucrats," he told the audience.

"Next week, Parliament resumes and the first opportunity I get, I will give the most cracking speech on the Murray Darling Basin."

Senator Madigan urged communities to stay united in their fight.

"There are people out there who

want to divide and conquer you," he said.

"They are going to try and sow seeds of doubt. You must not be distracted and you must not attack each other. You have to avoid being sucked in by the lies."

"You're in this together. United you stand and divided you fall."

"These people are manipulative but you can win this."

Senator Madigan continues his MDB trip with meetings in Mildura and Yea.

He said members of the cross-bench, including Senators Ricki Muir and Nick Xenophon, were taking a keen interest in the issue and he would be updating them on developments.

Earlier in the day, Senator Madigan met with Southern Riverina Irrigators - a group representing 1,600 irrigators in Deniliquin - and toured the local Sun Rice plant.

"Sun Rice is one of our great Australian producers. It exports to approximately 60 countries and feeds more than 20 million people a day," Senator Madigan said.

"Sun Rice is owned and run by farmers. It invests in regional communities and creates jobs, and it adds value to its core product."

"Sun Rice is a world leader in water efficiency - using 50 per cent less water on rice grown in any other country. And the MDBP is quickly and efficiently harming this fine Australian organisation."

## Special Rate Variation Application to IPART

### Additional information for Ratepayers

Wakool Shire Council, at its January 2015 Special Meeting, resolved to make an application for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 7% (inclusive of 2.40% rate peg amount) on ordinary rates to IPART.

The additional 4.60% (above the 2.40% rate peg

amount) being sought will generate an additional \$186,000 in 2015/2016 rating year and remain permanently.

SRV application must be submitted to IPART by 16th February, 2015. IPART will accept and consider submissions from ratepayers and individual groups regarding

the SRV up to four (4) weeks after the application deadline, i.e. to 16th March, 2015. Further information can be found on IPART's website [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)

The tables below will show the dollar impacts on minimum and average rates per rating sub-category.

Minimum Ratepayer			
Rate Sub-Categories	2014/2015 Minimum Rates	2015/2016 Minimum Rates	Additional per annum
Farmland - Dry	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Farmland - Irrigable	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Farmland - Intensive Farming Feedlots	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Urban Residential	\$400.00	\$428.00	\$28.00
Rural Residential	\$510.00	\$546.00	\$36.00
Business	\$420.00	\$450.00	\$30.00
Marina Moorings - Murray Downs	\$502.00	\$537.00	\$35.00
Large Grain Sheds - Moulamein	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Large Grain Sheds - Burraboi	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Barham	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Moulamein	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Tooleybuc	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Murray Downs	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Koraleigh	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Small Grain Sheds - Burraboi	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00
Transport Depots - Murray Downs	\$522.00	\$559.00	\$37.00

Average Ratepayer				
Rate Sub-Categories	Number	2014/2015	2015/2016	Additional per annum
Farmland - Dry	216	\$2,507.96	\$2,703.24	\$195.28
Farmland - Irrigable	704	\$3,253.85	\$3,475.29	\$221.44
Farmland - Intensive Farming Feedlots	3	\$10,177.04	\$10,887.75	\$710.71
Urban Residential	1,059	\$488.38	\$522.98	\$34.60
Rural Residential	588	\$694.14	\$741.87	\$47.73
Business	246	\$749.89	\$800.18	\$50.29
Marina Moorings - Murray Downs	9	\$604.88	\$646.59	\$41.71
Large Grain Sheds - Moulamein	3	\$9,271.70	\$9,919.18	\$647.48
Large Grain Sheds - Burraboi	2	\$3,719.30	\$3,979.03	\$259.73
Small Grain Sheds - Barham	1	\$4,994.79	\$5,343.61	\$348.82
Small Grain Sheds - Moulamein	1	\$867.15	\$927.71	\$60.56
Small Grain Sheds - Tooleybuc	2	\$797.78	\$853.49	\$55.71
Small Grain Sheds - Murray Downs	3	\$3,989.25	\$4,267.84	\$278.59
Small Grain Sheds - Koraleigh	1	\$693.72	\$742.16	\$48.44
Small Grain Sheds - Burraboi	1	\$1,033.23	\$1,105.38	\$72.15
Transport Depots - Murray Downs	1	\$3,566.37	\$3,815.42	\$249.05

## Barham Angling Club Fish Restocking



Recreational fisheries have been boosted in the local area from a recent restocking by the Barham Angling Club.

The club released 4890 Murray Cod at Gee Gee Bridge on the Wakool River, on the 21st January, with the help of the 'Dollar for Dollar' stocking program by DPI Fisheries.

Club President Gary Wilkinson said that "fishing is an extremely important social pastime for many community members and the restocking will provide the base for improved fishing in the region for many years. We are already seeing a recovery in native fish in the mid to lower Wakool River since the start of the collaborative blackwater recovery program, in 2011".

"The Club is grateful to the volunteers that raised funds for the restocking through sausage sizzles, fishing competitions and raffles and to the local businesses that have contributed. We trust the recreational fishing fraternity and businesses will be rewarded with improved catch rates and tourism dollars being circulated in the region".

The Barham Services Club has also just announced funding of \$1,000 for the Barham Angling Club which is great news, and will support fish restocking in the local region next season. We thank the Services Club again for their support.

About the blackwater restocking program

The mid to lower Wakool River was decimated by fish kills in 2010 and 2011, when

floodwaters created a blackwater event that reduced oxygen in the water to critical levels.

Fish sampling undertaken in 2011-12 by Murray CMA and NSW DPI Fisheries, indicated that native fish populations, especially Murray Cod, had been drastically reduced in the mid to lower section of the Edward-Wakool system. However, populations in the upper reaches of the system had remained stable. This was mainly due to the co-operation of Murray Irrigation Limited providing the use of Murray Irrigation channel escapes to supply good quality water in the upper Wakool River and create localised higher oxygen fish refuge zones, at the time of the blackwater event.

A collaborative effort involving the Edward Wakool Angling Association, local angling clubs, stocking groups, NSW DPI Fisheries and Murray Local Land Services, undertook a major stocking program to restock the effected mid to lower section of the Wakool River.

In total 119,800 Golden Perch and 59,100 Murray Cod were released at five strategic monitoring sites. It appears that these fish have indeed survived after a quick two hour fishing survey on the release day resulted in 7 cod ranging from 15cm to 52cm! The different sizes caught in the range represent the different age classes stocked and are now present in the system.

The restocking program also provided an opportunity to conduct much needed research on fish restocking success rates. All fingerlings released were chemically marked with calcein to uniquely identify these fish from fish recruited naturally in the system.

Batch marking fish with calcein enables future identification should these fish be

recaptured and then a subsequent calculation of the contribution of stocking to native fish recovery efforts in the region.

To assess the success of the Wakool blackwater restocking project and give some feedback to fishing clubs on the survival rate of stocked fish, Murray LLS funded targeted sampling at the key stocking sites hoping to determine what percentage of the current population of Murray Cod and Golden Perch are either naturally recruited fish or stocked fish.

The Edward Wakool Angling Association will keep you updated on the progress of these surveys in the future.

It has been estimated in some research that normally only 3 percent of stocked fish survive after being released, however it is anticipated that there will be much higher survival rates due to the loss of likely large bodied fish from the initial fish kill event which would have acted as predators on the fingerlings.

Other stocking research has resulted in some interesting outcomes. Over a 5 year period chemically marked fish were stocked into three local rivers, the Billabong Creek, Edward River, and the Murrumbidgee River with post-stocking surveys determining the proportion of marked fish.

The results showed that at least a proportion of the stocked fish survived to reach the legal minimum size in all three rivers. However, the impacts of stocking on population structure were very different among rivers.

In the Edward and Murrumbidgee Rivers, the age classes corresponding to the years of stocking were comprised of 18-38% experimentally stocked fish, and these fish made only a relatively minor contribution to the total catch of Golden perch.

In contrast, stocked fish comprised up to 100% of age classes corresponding to stocking years in Billabong Creek, and stocking resulted in a four-fold increase in the catch rates of Golden Perch. This could be attributed to the restrictions to fish movement in this system.

*Pictured above: Alex Knight releasing cod fingerlings near some weed and structure in the Wakool River.*



# Wakool Shire Wive

august  
2014

## WAKOOL SHIRE COUNCIL 2014/2015 BUDGET ADOPTED

Council adopted the 2014/2015 draft budget and Community Strategic Plan at its June Ordinary Meeting.

The budget had been amended at the May Ordinary Meeting after the Federal

Government announced a freeze on the indexation of Local Government Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years. This meant \$105,000 of revenue was removed from the 2014/2015 budget, while the effect on the 10-year Long Term

Financial Plan is a \$3.2m reduction in revenue.

Despite the freeze, Council will maintain expenditure on services and operations at the same levels as the last financial year. It will also be reviewing the organisation to find operational savings and is planning on a reduction in working capital in 2014/2015.

Council will also be starting the process for a special rate variation, to begin from the 2015/2016 financial year. This must be done through a community consultation process and application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Regardless of the announcement, Council's 2014/2015 budget still includes a number of initiatives, focusing on local roads and bridges, projects and economic development, including:

- Implementation of the accelerated timber bridge replacement program for local roads, with five timber bridges to be completed during the 2014/2015 financial year.

*Continued next page...*



Works are underway on Marunda Road Bridge as part of the accelerated timber bridge replacement program for local roads. Five timber bridges will be completed during the 2014/2015 financial year.



### *Also in this issue*

Economic  
Development update

Accelerated timber  
bridge replacement  
program

Get ready for the  
retune





# MAYOR'S MESSAGE

## CROSS-BORDER ISSUES UP FOR DISCUSSION

The Central Murray Cross Border Forum, to be held on the 29 and 30 October, will be tackling the huge number of issues for our communities living along either side of the New South Wales-Victoria border.

The forum, which is being arranged by Wakool Shire and Deniliquin Council, will see the meeting of seven New South Wales councils and three Victorian councils, as well as federal and state government representatives. Non-government, business and community groups will also be involved in the forum.

There are some 1200 cross-border issues along the Murray, from vehicle licensing and registration, health, education, building and construction, taxes, law enforcement, and more. Post-hospital care continues to be of a major concern, while water transfers also remain a big problem.

Councils and community members are being asked to provide their concerns around cross-border issues in the lead up to the event. Further details on the forum and its program will be available later this month.

Actions from the October forum's recommendations will be included in a five-year strategy with planned annual forums and workshops to build on the actions from this strategy.

## 2014/2015 BUDGET

Despite the impact of the freeze on indexation of Financial Assistant Grants, Council's 2014/2015 budget does include a number of initiatives and projects.

As mentioned in this edition of Shire Wire, the budget has a focus on local roads and bridges, and town maintenance and construction – including the resealing program and stormwater drainage for Barham and Moulamein.

It's also great to see funding towards the scoping and planning of the Moulamein Hub and Wakool Agrifood Naturally (formerly Barham Q Centre) projects at \$50,000 each. The budget also makes provision for Council's economic development, which Council was pleased to welcome Gary Kerr as Economic Development and Tourism Manager.

Gary is already concentrating on a number of economic development initiatives within the Shire, including updating Council's economic development strategy, which the draft has been out on public exhibition. Consultation and community meetings around economic development within the Shire are also underway.

Council is committed to supporting economic development throughout our Shire and invite our business and broader communities to join us in building a resilient, growing local economy and vibrant communities.

*Neil Gorey* MAYOR

## Citizenship Award Nominations Open Next Month

This September, Wakool Shire Council will once again be inviting nominations for the following awards for 2014:

- **Citizen of the Year**
- **Junior Citizen of the Year**
- **Sportsperson or Sporting Achievement of the Year**
- **Community Event of the Year**

The aim of the awards is to recognise outstanding contributions to the local community, and to highlight the importance and significance of Australia Day. Start thinking about who you think might be a worthy candidate in your town and pick up a nomination form in September from Council Offices or on our website.

The awards will be presented to the recipients at their local Australia Day celebrations in 2015.

## Routine weed spraying in progress

Council is currently carrying out routine weed spraying of all local and main road shoulders throughout the Wakool Shire Council area at various times.

The immediate area being sprayed will be sign posted while the spray unit is in operation/progress.

Weed spraying around the Shire will continue until the 17 July 2015.

If you have any enquiries or would like further information, please contact Council's Noxious Weeds Officer, Stephen Battenally on 0427 513 982 during business hours.

### From front page...

- \$1.158m for roads and bridge maintenance.
- \$556,000 for the rural roads resealing program.
- \$350,000 for gravel re-sheets and formation works.
- More than \$1.5m towards town maintenance and construction, including:
  - o \$856,300 for town works maintenance
  - o \$138,000 for the resealing program
  - o \$120,000 towards the Stormwater Drainage Strategy for Barham and Moulamein.
- \$50,000 each for scoping and plan preparation for the Moulamein Hub and Wakool Agrifood Naturally (formerly Barham Q Centre) projects.



## GET READY FOR THE RETUNE!

As the final step in Australia's successful move to digital-only TV, some TV channels will be changing frequencies. These moves will free up broadcasting spectrum so that it can be used for new services such as mobile broadband.

After the channels have changed, you will need to retune your digital TV, set-top box or digital TV recorder to find the channels that have moved.

The retune will take place across Australia progressively until the end of 2014. Your retune date depends on your location and which tower you're receiving your TV signal from.

Some people within the same town or city will have different retune dates. This is because some areas may be serviced by a number of TV towers. The best way to find the retune date in your area is by entering your address into the "Get retune info" box on the website at: [digitalready.gov.au/retune](http://digitalready.gov.au/retune).

Just like the successful switch to digital-only TV, the retune has been carefully planned to make sure the change is as easy as possible.

For further information on retuning, visit the retune website at [digitalready.gov.au/retune](http://digitalready.gov.au/retune) or contact the call centre on 1800 20 10 13, 8am to 10pm (AEST), 7 days.

## COUNCILLORS REDUCE ALLOWANCE

At its June meeting, Council formally elected to reduce the current Councillor allowance to the minimum payable and to freeze the Mayoral allowance at its current level for the next financial year.

The reduction of the Councillor allowance and freezing of Mayoral allowance is in recognition of the impact on Council's 2014/2015 budget following the freeze on the indexation of Local Government Financial Assistance Grants.

"The freeze on the indexation of Financial Assistance Grants had an impact of \$105,000 in revenue for Council's 2014/2015 budget," Wakool Shire Council Mayor Cr Neil Gorey said.

"In light of this impact and the resulting effect on the budget, Council felt it was only right to lower its fees to the minimum payable for the next 12 months, as well as keep the Mayoral allowance at the same level as the previous financial year."

## Wandering Stock Reminders

Wakool Shire's Compliance Team are reminding local farmers of the dangers of wandering stock on public roads.

Under the Crown Lands Act 1993 it is an offence to allow stock to graze or be driven on public land due to the risks involved.

Stock wandering uncontrolled on roads and even in public places are serious hazards for both people and road traffic, particularly at night.

In a bid to eliminate this problem, Wakool Shire have invested in portable stock yards which will allow Rangers to impound animals that are found grazing in public areas.

Penalty Infringement Notices may also apply along with the associated costs of impounding.

While impoundment is necessary to ensure traffic safety and to protect the animals themselves, our Compliance Team will make every effort to work with farmers to recommend the best solutions for stock grazing.

Think of the public and help make our roads a safer place by contacting our Compliance Team: 03 5453 3200.



Column steel piles being installed for Nacurrie Road North Bridge.

## Timber bridge replacement program underway

Wakool Shire Council's accelerated timber bridge replacement program for local roads is in progress, with works to Nacurrie Road North Bridge underway.

Approximately 52 metres long, the Nacurrie Road North Bridge is seven spans, each of which is 7.5 metres long. Forty universal column steel piles up to 20 metres deep have been installed, while a modular steel frame structure will be assembled for the superstructure below the deck. Modular precast concrete will then be installed above the steel frame structure.

The Nacurrie Road North Bridge, which is being delivered by Council staff and contractors, is expected to be finished during the next couple of months. The final stage will include works at the bridge approaches.

In addition to the Nacurrie Road North Bridge, four more bridges will be delivered during this financial year under the timber bridge replacement program.

This includes Marunda Bridge which has been excavated and is ready for pile driving, while designs for Coolbool Island Bridge are nearing completion.

## Next Of Kin Program

Barham Police are inviting people living alone to register for the Next of Kin Program.

The Next of Kin Program is FREE and enables people living alone, regardless of age or disability to record their details at their local police station.

The information is entered on NSW Police Next of Kin Register and holds information of the nominated next of kin, doctors, dentists and any medical warnings which may be used to assist ambulance and police in an emergency situation. If an incident occurs that leaves them incapacitated, emergency services will be able to contact a next of kin or medical services for guidance.

The registered person is provided with a key ring and a sticker displaying their registered number to place on their phone or refrigerator to alert emergency services that they are a registered person.

Registration forms can be collected from Barham Police Station, Barham Community Health, Barham HACC office, Barham Medical Centre, and the Barham and Moulamein Council Offices. Police will arrange collection of completed registration forms from these places or forms can be returned directly to Barham Police Station.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Barham Police Station on 03 5453 2044.



# Renewed focus on Tourism and Economic Development

Wakool Shire Council has welcomed its new Economic Development and Tourism Manager, Gary Kerr.

Gary has been involved in economic development in regional New South Wales and Queensland for around 20 years.

One of his initial tasks was updating Council's Economic Development Strategy, which sets out actions and outcomes for economic development within the Shire. The draft strategy 2014-2017 was adopted by Council at the July Ordinary Meeting.

The strategy focuses on directions identified in Council's Vision 2023 Community Strategic Plan, and six driving sectors of the Wakool Shire economy – agriculture, tourism, health and community services, education, retail and the Red Gum industry.

A further report will be presented to Council for consideration and adoption of the Economic Development Strategy, including any amendments, after the public exhibition period.

Council is certainly looking forward to the new initiatives that will emerge from this updated strategy and the economic direction it will take the Shire now and into the future.

The Moulamein and District Endless Opportunities Forum also saw around 60 community members provide feedback to Council and discuss a range of opportunities for the district.

Discussions centred on town centre revitalisation, tourism and value-added agriculture, with a range of ideas to come out of these themes.

Ideas included walking and bicycle trails in town and surrounds (including along the river), town entry and promotions, and an arts and crafts theme within the central business district. The forum also identified a possible annual agriculture forum focusing on research and education.

At the time of writing, a Tooleybuc Central Business District Revitalisation Forum was due to be held on the 6 August 2014. Details on the forum and its outcomes will be in the next edition of Shire Wire, due out in mid-November.

Gary can be contacted at the Barham Office on 03 5453 3200.



**General Manager Bruce Graham with Economic Development and Tourism Manager Gary Kerr.**

## FOR YOUR INFO: COUNCIL MEETINGS

Due to the Moulamein Office redevelopment, locations of the monthly Council meetings will continue to rotate across the Shire for 2014.

## ORDINARY MEETINGS

Wakool (20th August 2014)

Barham (17th September 2014)

Moulamein (15th October 2014)

Murray Downs (19th November 2014)

Council's Ordinary Meetings start at 2pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend these monthly meetings.

Council meeting agendas and minutes are available from the Barham or Moulamein Offices or on Council's website.

If there's information you can't find, call our administrative services team on 03 5887 5007 and they will pass the information to you.

If you're interested in addressing Council on any matter, this needs to be discussed with our Executive Assistant who can be contacted on 03 5887 5007 during business hours.

# Tooleybuc Bridge update

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) in partnership with VicRoads, has started planning for a new bridge at Tooleybuc.

After receiving feedback from the community, three route options have been selected for further investigation. All options connect to Murray Street.

- Yellow option – a high level bridge downstream of the existing bridge.
- Blue option – a low level bridge with a lift span immediately next to and upstream of the existing bridge.
- Purple option – a low level bridge with a lift span upstream of the existing bridge (based on the previous high level orange option).

Together with VicRoads and Wakool Shire Council, RMS are currently carrying out specialist studies around these three options.

A noise and vibration assessment has been completed, while a flood modelling study and a socio-economic study are underway. RMS will also start underwater surveys and an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment around the options. A flora and fauna assessment is due to start in spring.

An urban design study will look at the landscape and the visual impact of each bridge option, and an architectural firm will be engaged regarding ideas around the old Tooleybuc Bridge, including the wharf.

Following the studies, RMS will present their results and their preferred bridge option at a community consultation session, expected to take place by March 2015.

Further details regarding the studies and the consultation session will be in the next edition of Shire Wire due out in mid-November.

**Wakool Shire Council will also be working with the Tooleybuc community regarding a range of opportunities for the town around the replacement bridge, whichever option is decided.**

**This includes revitalising the affected section of Murray Street and keeping heritage aspects of the original bridge, such as the bridge keeper's cottage.**

**Council and the Tooleybuc community will identify preferred revitalisation projects and will work with Roads and Maritime Services to realise these opportunities.**

The Murray River Bridge at Tooleybuc is part of the NSW Government's Bridges for Bush initiative.



# What's on in the Wakool Shire

## Rock by the River Festival, Fourth weekend in August

A top weekend line up for you to enjoy! Rock and Roll at its best. For more information Ph 03 5453 2159.

## Border Open Pro-Am, Second weekend in September

Australia's longest running two day Pro-Am. For more information, Club Professional Rob McNaughton Ph 03 5453 2772.

## Tooleybuc Country Music Festival, Third weekend in September

Web: [www.tooleybucsc.com.au](http://www.tooleybucsc.com.au)

## Barham Koondrook Show, Third weekend in October

Great entertainment on stage Friday evening, culminating with a spectacular fireworks display from 9pm. A full program of entertainment and attractions continues Saturday. For more information, Phone 03 5453 2021.

## Wakool Sheep Races, First Saturday of November

It's the Melbourne Cup of the Bush! Be in with a chance to win cash if your sheep runs first in the prestigious Wakool Cup. Call Max Treweek Ph 03 5887 1166.

## Tooleybuc Murray Muster, Third weekend in November

A superb line up of country music artists to entertain at the Tooleybuc Club. For more info Ph 03 5030 5476.

## Moulamein Races, Second Saturday of December

Kick up your hooves at the annual Moulamein Races. A day jam packed with racing, fashion & fun for the whole family. For more race information, Tarsh on Ph 03 5034 0591.



Tooleybuc Country Music Festival rolls into town in September.

## WHAT'S ON SECTION IS CHANGING

Events will only be listed if details have been forwarded for the next edition. Even if your events are run annually it will not be included unless your club or organisation contacts Council with details to ensure they are current from year to year - this also gives the opportunity for smaller, non-annual events to submit details too.

Please email your listings to [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au) - you may also include one picture of your event if you want.

Shire Wire editions are Mid February, Mid May, Mid August, Mid November; so if your event runs at the start of February your event would be best listed in the November edition.



Baljit Atwal and Jacob Pitlo officially became Australian Citizens following a Citizenship Ceremony at the Barham Reception Centre on the 27 June. The ceremony, attended by family members, friends and Council staff, was conducted by Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey.



# Wakool's World of Works

A selected snapshot of some current projects and works by our Engineering Department...

## PROJECTS

- Council is managing the replacement of the Gee Gee Bridge (currently owned by RMS). Following environmental studies, construction on the replacement bridge is anticipated to start in late 2015.
- Renewal of East Barham Road is continuing.
- A 2km section of road between Wakool and Deniliquin will be renewed.
- The Tooleybuc Water Treatment Plant upgrade is expected to start early next year. The upgrade will increase the water treatment plant's capacity.
- The next stage of the Barham Stormwater Strategy will include the renewal of pumping stations in Gonn Street, which will take place this financial year. This will be followed by the renewal of underground drainage in Punt Road (late 2015).

## OTHER PROJECTS

- Sewer rehabilitation works are programmed for Moulamein and Murray Downs this financial year.
- Draft Flood Risk Plans were adopted at the June Council meeting, with the draft plans then put on public display for feedback. Flood mitigation measures from the plans will now be examined.
- MR319 Thule and Gonn Street reconstruction is complete. Water main replacement will take place along Thule Street.
- Work is complete on the erosion and retaining wall remediation in Barham by Comdain Infrastructure. Construction of a timber facade for the front of the concrete panels has commenced as part of the Better Boating Program.
- Culverts in Vinecombe Lane and Lawson Road are complete as part of the Barham Stormwater Strategy.
- Works on the Moulamein Office car park have started, with kerbing and access complete. This project involves new kerbing, footpaths, surface and landscaping.

## GENERAL

- Traffic counts have been placed along Wakool Street between Thule and Mellool Street, Noorong and Niemur Street and Punt Road and Forest Street in Barham.
- Various roads have been graded throughout the Shire.
- Road sign inspections/installation has taken place.
- Road and bridge inspections are being conducted.
- Playground inspections have been carried out.



Construction for the replacement of Gee Gee Bridge is anticipated to start in late 2015.

- Ongoing routine maintenance has been performed in each township of the Shire.
- Repairs and maintenance is taking place in all towns, including routine pavement patching and soft fall replacement.

## Medal for Barham Avocados in ABC produce awards

Congratulations to Barham Avocados on becoming a medallist in this year's ABC Delicious Produce Awards!

Barham Avocados received the recognition for its Reed avocado in the From the Earth category, the company was also a finalist in the same category as artisan producer for Avo' Oil.

Barham Avocados were also medallists in the 2012 and 2013 ABC Delicious Produce Awards.

Congratulations also go to Bundarra Berkshires Free Range Pork and the Red Gum Food Group, both of whom also reached the finals of this year's awards.

Bundarra Berkshires Free Range Pork was a finalist in the From the Paddock category for its free-range Berkshire pork and artisan producer for Berkshire handcrafted bacon.

The Koondrook Barham Farmers' Market was also named as a finalist in the Outstanding Farmers' Market category.

More than 3000 products were entered into this year's ABC Delicious Produce Awards. Sixty finalists were chosen for national judging, which was narrowed down to 19 finalists after a produce tasting by the awards' judges in Sydney.

## YOUR COUNCILLORS



**Cr Neil Gorey  
(Mayor)**  
"Moorookyle"  
Barham 2732  
Ph 0428 536 513  
Fax 03 5453 6513



**Cr Anthony Jackson  
(Deputy Mayor)**  
PO Box 252  
Barham NSW 2732  
Ph 0427 533 097  
Fax 03 5453 1452



**Cr Lois Lockhart  
"Old Goodnight"**  
Goodnight 2736  
Ph 03 5030 5544  
Fax 03 5030 5544



**Cr Katarni Lipp**  
64 Tallow Street  
Moulamein 2733  
Ph 0427 184 174  
Fax 03 5887 5155



**Cr Colin Membrey**  
39 Punt Road  
Barham NSW 2732  
Ph 03 5453 1408  
Fax 03 5453 1024



**Cr Ann Crowe**  
PO Box 1458  
Swan Hill VIC 3585  
Ph/Fax 5033 1734  
Ph 0438 331 733



# What's on in the Wakool Shire

## Moulamein Races, second Saturday of December

Kick up your hooves at the annual Moulamein Races. A day jam packed with racing, fashion and fun for the whole family. For more race information, Tarsh on Ph 03 5034 0591.

## Koondrook Barham Farmers Market, third Sunday of every month

A monthly market held on the bank of the Murray River in Koondrook, right next to the majestic old bridge. The stallholders come from all different walks and pride themselves on the regions unique produce... meet them in person at the market held on the 3rd Sunday of the month from 8.30am-1pm. Visit [www.kbfarmersmarket.org](http://www.kbfarmersmarket.org) for information.

## Christmas dinner and show with Izzy Dye, second weekend in December

Tooleybuc Sporting Club, visit [tooleybucsc.com.au](http://tooleybucsc.com.au) or phone 03 5030 5476.

## Band - Top Secret, New Years Eve

Tooleybuc Sporting Club, visit [tooleybucsc.com.au](http://tooleybucsc.com.au) or phone 03 5030 5476.

## Great Aussie Lilo Race, Australia Day Weekend

An annual event that keeps attracting the crowds! Throw your lilo, tube or any other floating device into the Murray and see who makes it to the end of the course first! A local fundraiser and great event suitable for the whole family. Keep an eye out for details locally closer to the event.

## Koondrook Barham Fishing Comp, last weekend in February

Great Weekend of fishing for all. Excellent prizes. Contact Darren Lodge on 0429 434 338 for information.



Band Top Secret will play at the Tooleybuc Sporting Club on New Year's Eve.

## HOW DO I LIST MY EVENT?

Events will only be listed if details have been forwarded for the next edition. Even if your events are run annually it will not be included unless your club or organisation contacts Council with details to ensure they are current from year to year - this also gives the opportunity for smaller, non-annual events to submit details too.

Please email your listings to [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au) - you may also include one picture of your event if you want. Shire Wire editions are Mid February, Mid May, Mid August, Mid November.

# GETTING FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Following the recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel, the New South Wales Government has released its Fit for the Future package.

In its response to the Independent Local Government Review Panel's recommendations and subsequent Fit for the Future package, Wakool Shire has considered two important principles - services to our communities and community representation.

Therefore, at its October meeting, Council resolved to pursue the option to become a Rural Council, which would see it work with other similar-sized councils within the Mid-Murray Group.

While the formation of a Rural Council will mean changes to services and operations to ensure efficiency and performance, Council remains strongly committed to ensuring residents and ratepayers receive acceptable levels of service.



The alternative proposed in the Government's Fit for the Future package is for Wakool Shire Council to consider merging with Deniliquin, Conargo and Murray Shire Councils to form a Regional Council centred in Deniliquin. This is not Wakool Shire Council's preferred option.

We are seeking community feedback on the option of Wakool becoming a Rural Council or the alternative of merging with Deniliquin, Conargo and Murray to form a Regional Council. Feedback should be addressed to the General Manager, Wakool Shire Council and can be sent to [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au) or Private Bag 40 Moulamein NSW 2733.

Councils will now assess their current position and submit a Fit for the Future proposal by 30 June 2015.

For more information regarding Fit for the Future visit [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au).

## MOWER DONATIONS

Wakool Shire Council has donated a Kubota ride-on tractor mower to the Tooleybuc Recreation Reserve Committee and a Toro ground master ride-on mower to the Barham Recreation Reserve Committee.



Barham Recreation Reserve Committee member Paul Robinson, Wakool Shire Council's Wayne Friedberger, Barham Recreation Reserve Committee member Sandy Lang, Mayor Neil Gorey and Barham Recreation Reserve Committee members Bob Eaton and Brian O'Farrell.



Tooleybuc Club CEO Darrell Fishpool, Tooleybuc Club Greenskeeper Roger Domaille, Wakool Shire Councillor Lois Lockhart and Wakool Shire Council General Manager Bruce Graham.

## SHOP SMALL® IS COMING TO WAKOOL SHIRE THIS NOVEMBER

Shop Small® is being rolled out this November. It's a movement dedicated to supporting the small business owners who do big things for customers and communities in our towns. You know the ones - the family businesses, the start-ups, the independents that make your neighbourhood your neighbourhood.



Wakool Shire Council is proud to help support these businesses. Because it's no secret that thriving local shops create thriving local communities, which in turn create local jobs. And that's good for everyone, right?

So this November, think big - Shop Small.

Join the Shop Small movement and support our local businesses.

## Koraleigh Community Hall works

Koraleigh Community Hall will be a lot cooler this summer thanks to the installation of a reverse-cycle air conditioner.

As part of the installation, the hall's power supply was upgraded, including replacing the electrical switchboard and four double power points.

The split-system, reverse-cycle air conditioner will make the facility more useable and comfortable throughout the year, particularly during the extreme summer and winter months.

The works were made possible through the New South Wales Government's Community Building Partnership Program, which contributed funding towards the project.



Koraleigh Community Hall's power supply was upgraded as part of the works.

## YOUR COUNCILLORS



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"Moorookyle"  
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# SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION SESSIONS TO GET UNDERWAY

Starting Monday, 24 November, Council will hold a series of community consultation sessions throughout the Shire regarding a proposed special rate variation in 2015/2016.

All meetings will start at 5.30pm, the community consultation meeting dates are:



The special rate variation consultation sessions will also discuss how service levels may be effected, such as maintenance of roads and roadsides, and parks and gardens.

### Week 1

- Monday, 24th November - School of Arts Hall Barham
- Tuesday, 25th November - Wakool Club
- Wednesday, 26th November - Moulamein Club

### Week 2

- Tuesday, 2nd December - Murray Downs Fire Shed
- Wednesday, 3rd December - Tooleybuc Club

The consultation sessions will present four scenarios:

### Scenario 1

No special rate variation (SRV). This would result in a reduction of existing service levels.

### Scenario 2

An SRV of 7% in 2015/2016 to maintain existing service levels.

### Scenario 3

SRV of 7% in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. This will maintain existing service levels and advance the replacement of three additional timber bridges. It will also negate the need to borrow money for the timber bridge replacement program.

### Scenario 4

SRV of 6.67% average for three years starting in 2015/2016. This will provide the same outcomes as Scenario 2, plus the replacement of three additional timber bridges.

Following the consultation sessions, a report will be presented to Council at its December meeting, where it will decide whether to continue with the special rate variation process.

If Council elects to continue with the SRV process, an application will be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal by the middle of February. The special rate variation would commence in July 2015.



## Also in this issue

Wakool's World of Works

Timber bridge replacement update

Murray Downs raw water reuse scheme





# MAYOR’S MESSAGE

## SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION

As outlined in this edition of Shire Wire, starting this month Council is holding a series of consultation sessions around the proposed special rate variation.

The special rate variation, which, if Council pursues the process, will come into effect in 2015/2016 and is in response to the freeze on indexation for Financial Assistance Grants for the next three years.

This freeze resulted in Council having to adjust its 2014/2015 budget and its 10-year Long Term Financial Plan. Furthermore, the loss of this income means Council's existing service levels will be effected, including maintenance on rural roads, parks and gardens and roadsides.

The consultation sessions will present four special rate variation scenarios, which you can read about in further detail in this newsletter.

It's important that our communities are informed about the special rate variation, the options and what it will mean in terms of rates and provision of services. If you are able, I urge you to attend one of these consultation sessions.

## FIT FOR THE FUTURE

At its October meeting, Council agreed to pursue the option to become a Rural Council as set out in the New South Wales Government's Fit for the Future program, part of Local Government reform across the state.

As a Rural Council, Wakool Shire will work with other similar-sized councils within

the Mid-Murray Group. This will not only help to ensure service delivery to our communities, but will provide Wakool with a strong voice within the region.

The alternative proposed in the Government's Fit for the Future package is for Wakool Shire Council to consider merging with Deniliquin, Conargo and Murray Shire Councils to form a Regional Council centred on Deniliquin. This is not Wakool Shire Council's preferred option.

We are seeking your input on these options, which you can read about in more detail in this newsletter.

## BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY THANK YOU

I would like to thank our local businesses for their involvement in the Murray Darling Basin Regional Economic Diversification Program funding applications. Council put in a number of applications to the program, as have local businesses across the Shire.

I would also like to thank our community and businesses for their input into Council's Economic Development Strategy, Economic Impact Assessment and the Wakool Agrifood Naturally feasibility study.

The resulting feedback has been extremely helpful in determining the effects on our economy of recent and past events, including water reductions. This feedback has also highlighted the resilience of our communities and the innovation of businesses, including farmers, who are diversifying and investigating different markets and business opportunities.

*Neil Gorey* MAYOR

# Economic Development update

Council's Economic Development Unit has been fairly busy during the past few months working on a number of projects.

## FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Council has lodged funding applications with the Murray Darling Basin Regional Economic Diversification Fund for the Wakool Agrifood Naturally project, Wakool Community Foundation and Moulamein Community Hub.

The Wakool Agrifood Naturally summary report, presented at the October Council meeting, recommended establishing a Wakool Agrifood Naturally cluster. The cluster will benefit businesses within the Barham and broader Wakool area to generate new economic development within the local economy. The initiative aims to counteract the impacts of water cutbacks through the Murray Darling Basin Plan, reduction of the red gum timber industry, low-cost imports and the cutting of food prices among supermarket chains.

The Wakool Community Foundation is a philanthropic foundation that could potentially provide up to \$300,000 per year, every year to support community and business groups. This amount could be doubled if used to leverage other funding programs.

A series of community consultation forums held throughout the Shire saw broad support for the foundation, including maintaining and improving the liveability of communities. This is a critical factor in retaining and attracting skilled workers.

The proposed Moulamein Community Hub will be a best practice hub, co-locating Council's Business Centre, Community Health Centre, library and Home and Community Care (HACC) services, and additional business support facilities.

## BARHAM CONSOLIDATED

Following its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on the 29th of October, Barham Consolidated will be increasing its role in Barham's business community. This includes coordination of a number of local business activities around networking, advocacy, business opportunities and functions. The Executive Board for the 2014/15 year is Colin Membrey (Chair), Kent Bassett (Vice-Chair), Faye Ashwin (Treasurer) and Gary Kerr (Ex-Officio secretary). The AGM also unanimously resolved to set a \$55 (including GST) membership fee for the next 12 months, which will give members access to the range of planned activities.

## BROADBAND SERVICES

During November, submissions will be prepared to the National Broadband Network (NBN) and Telstra for upgrades to improve current infrastructure throughout the Shire before the NBN becomes available. The submissions will also address the need to ensure NBN coverage caters for future growth of towns and rural parts of the Shire.

# Switch flicked on Murray Downs Raw Water Reuse Scheme

Murray Downs residents will be able to save costs when watering their gardens this summer with the raw water reuse scheme switched on last month.

The water reuse scheme means residents will use water from the Murray River for their gardens, rather than drinking water, saving costs.

Residents will notice discolouration in water from their garden hose and are reminded this is raw water from the river and therefore not safe to drink.

All Murray Downs residents were notified in the lead up to the switching on of the raw water reuse scheme, and every property checked for the raw water connectivity. Drinking water and the raw water connections have also been checked at every property to ensure these water systems are separated, eliminating cross-contamination.

Pumping stations along the Murray River have also been installed as part of the scheme, while infrastructure for a future connection to reuse waste water has also been installed.

The project stems from an agreement when the Murray Downs site was approved that Wakool Shire Council would install a scheme for the area's residents to reuse raw water.

The project was made possible through the Commonwealth Government's Strengthening Basin Communities program which contributed 50 per cent to the \$800,000 scheme.

Murray Downs residents who have any questions, concerns or would like more information about the raw water reuse scheme can call Wakool Shire Council on 03 5887 5007.

# WAKOOL’S WORLD OF WORKS

A selected snapshot of some current projects and works by our Engineering Department...

## PROJECTS

- Council is managing the replacement of the Gee Gee Bridge (currently owned by RMS). The bridge is currently in the conceptual design stage. Geotechnical studies will also be carried out during November. It is anticipated construction works on the bridge will start in the 2015/2016 financial year.
- The next stages of the East Barham Road renewal are commencing. The first stage is expected to be completed at the end of November, with the next stage of reconstruction works to start early in the New Year.
- Two pump stations have been replaced as part of the Barham Stormwater Strategy. The tender process for piping in Punt Road has begun, with works to start early next year.
- The first stage of the Barham Boardwalk is complete. The sourcing of funding for the boardwalk's next stages is in progress.

## OTHER PROJECTS

- MR 94 road reconstruction has commenced. It is expected the road will be ready for sealing in November.
- The maintenance and repair report for sewer investigations has been received.



Works for the replacement of Gee Gee Bridge are expected to start in the 2015/2016 financial year.

## Changes to existing holdings from 2015

After the 31st December this year, rural land owners of vacant land under 500 hectares defined as "existing holding" under the current Wakool Local Environmental Plan will no longer be able to apply for building permission.

Rural land owners of existing holdings in the Shire who wish to build on these vacant blocks must lodge a development application with Council before the 31st December, 2014.

If development approval is granted, applicants have five years to physically commence work on their developments.

Anyone wishing to discuss the matter with Council's planning staff should call the Council's Development Services Department on 03 5453 3200 or email mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au.

Development Service staff are also available by appointment at Council's Barham and Moulamein offices between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

The maintenance and repair program is in the process of being developed.

- The Barham Sewer Rising Main is complete, connected and running.
- A tender for the Gravity Stormwater Strategy has been advertised. A site meeting was conducted with registered parties on the 8 October, 2014.
- The Better Boating Program Steps and retaining wall works at Barham are on hold due to river levels.

## GENERAL

- Road shoulder grading has taken place throughout the Shire
- Ongoing routine maintenance has been performed in each township of the Shire.
- Repairs and maintenance is taking place in all towns, including routine pavement patching and soft fall replacement.

## ROADSIDE FIRE PREPARATION WORKS

Council will carry out roadside fire preparation works across the Shire. These works will include grass slashing and spraying of roadsides, as well as grass slashing around towns. The works will also include the preparation of specific fire breaks, including grading Keri Keri Road.



## Fruit fly and the home gardener

As we look towards summer, Council's Weeds and Environment Team would like to remind residents about their responsibilities and how to minimise the threat of the fruit fly pest.

Fruit fly attack and damage fruit and vegetables and are therefore a problem pest for home gardeners and fruit and vegetable growers.

Fruit fly hosts include summer ripening fruit such as stone fruit, strawberries and apples, and vegetables such as tomatoes and capsicums. If uncontrolled, fruit flies can damage up to 100 per cent of some fruit crops.

If you grow fruit and vegetables in your home garden that fruit fly are prone to attack, you are responsible for controlling the pest.

Before starting fruit fly control, spend some time thinking about fruit fly, your situation and your garden:

- Are you prepared to control fruit fly on an ongoing basis?
- Are you willing and physically able to undertake particular control methods?
- Do you live in an area prone to fruit fly attack and want to control the pest, or do you want to prevent fruit flies from gaining a foothold in your garden?
- What fruit and vegetables in your garden are prone to fruit fly attack?
- Do you prefer to use low impact methods rather than chemical methods?
- Do you grow large quantities of crops or small amounts?
- Can you tolerate some fruit fly damage to your fruit and vegetables?
- Do you need to grow plants that are fruit fly hosts or could you replace some with non-host plants?
- Do you own or rent where your garden is?

### What can you do?

Unfortunately, there isn't a simple way to eliminate fruit fly. Instead, you need to put in place several methods to effectively control the pest. One important component in every control program is sanitation. This includes good garden hygiene practices such as picking up and destroying fallen fruit which can help break the fruit fly life cycle and prevent fruit fly numbers increasing.

For further information and other tips visit [www.preventfruitfly.com.au](http://www.preventfruitfly.com.au) or contact our Weeds and Environment Team at the Moulamein Office on 03 5887 5007.

# Timber bridge replacement program update

Works on the replacement of two bridges through Council's accelerated timber bridge replacement program are coming close to completion.

The final stages of works are currently taking place on the bridge approaches for Nacurrie Road North Bridge and Marunda Bridge. Both bridges are expected to be finished by the end of November.

Two more bridges are anticipated to be completed this financial year – Coobool Island Bridge and Coobool Siding Bridge. A piling



The final stages of works are taking place on the Nacurrie Road North Bridge.

contract for these two bridges is expected to be finalised in February next year.

The replacement of Officers Road Bridge will also get underway next year, with works expected to start in May/June 2015.

Council has applied to both the New South Wales and Federal Governments for expansion of its bridge programs. It also has agreements in place for the replacement of three more bridges in the Waugorah area as part of the Nimmie-Caira project's Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program.



# Tooleybuc Bridge update

Roads and Maritime Services in partnership with VicRoads, has started planning for a new bridge at Tooleybuc.

Following feedback from the community, three route options have been selected for further investigation. All options connect to Murray Street.

- Yellow option – a high level bridge downstream of the existing bridge.
- Blue option – a low level bridge with a lift span immediately next to and upstream of the existing bridge.
- Purple option – a low level bridge with a lift span upstream of the existing bridge (based on the previous high level orange option).

Together with VicRoads and Wakool Shire Council, Roads and Maritime are carrying out specialist studies around these three options.

Noise and vibration and socio-economic assessments have been completed, while a flood modelling study is underway. Roads and Maritime will also carry out Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Flora and Fauna Assessments around the options in coming weeks.

An urban design study looked at the landscape and the visual impact of each bridge option, while an architectural firm was engaged regarding ideas around the old Tooleybuc Bridge, including a potential wharf.

Following the studies, Roads and Maritime will present their results and their preferred bridge option at a community consultation session, expected to take place by March 2015. A 3D 'fly-through' animation for bridge options will be available for viewing in time for the community session.

Further details regarding the studies and the consultation session will be in the next edition of Shire Wire due out in mid-February.

The Murray River Bridge at Tooleybuc is part of the NSW Government's Bridges for Bush initiative.

## Volunteer thank you

Wakool Shire Council, including its library staff, would like to thank long-time library volunteer Barbara Ansell.

Barbara, who is in her eighties, has been volunteering with the Wakool Shire Library for around 11 years. Before her current volunteer role, Barbara had previously volunteered at the Shire's old library, before returning to her teaching career.

Barbara's experience within the library, her knowledge and assistance continues to be invaluable for both staff and library customers.

Thanks Barbara!

## FOR YOUR INFO:

# COUNCIL MEETINGS

Locations of the monthly Council meetings will continue to rotate across the Shire for the remainder of 2014 and 2015.

# ORDINARY MEETINGS

Murray Downs (19th November 2014, 10am)

Barham (10th December 2014)

Moulamein (18th February 2015)

Tooleybuc (18th March 2015)

Council's Ordinary Meetings start at 2pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend these monthly meetings. Council meetings agendas and minutes are available from the Barham or Moulamein Offices or on Council's website. If there's information you can't find, call our administrative services team on 03 5887 5007 and they will pass the information to you. If you're interested in addressing Council on any matter, this needs to be discussed with our Executive Assistant who can be contacted on 03 5887 5007 during business hours.



# What's on in the Wakool Shire

## The Barham Koondrook photographic and video competition, January through to March

For entries of photographs taken in and around the Barham Koondrook area. Entries open 1 Jan 2015 and close 2 March 2015. \$5 per entry. Winners will be announced at the annual Awards Night: 7pm Friday 27th March 2015 Barham Golf Club, Moulamein Rd. Entry: \$5.00. Supper provided. Visit [www.barhamonthemurray.com.au](http://www.barhamonthemurray.com.au) for more information.

## Barham Country Stampede, from third weekend in February

Another action packed week at cluBarham with a program which promises well known artists performing on a number of stages each day. For more information phone 03 5453 2159.

## Koondrook Barham Fishing Comp, Last weekend in February

Great weekend of fishing for all. Excellent prizes. Contact Darren Lodge on 0429 434 338.

## Wakool Show, Second weekend in March

Held at the Wakool Recreation Reserve. A family fun night on Friday culminating with fireworks. All the traditional country show displays, attractions and exhibits on Saturday.

## Pirate Spinnerbaits Cash Classic – Moulamein Football Netball Club, Long weekend in March

A great weekend of fishing - catch and release only, Edward River Bait & Tackle Junior Classic, Outlaw Spinnerbait & Gladiator Tackle Cash Classic. Contact Dick Lucas on 0429 852 504 for information.

## Tooleybuc Festival of Country Music, Last weekend in March

Experience some great country music at the Tooleybuc Club. Enjoy the festival, relax and stay the whole weekend. Phone 03 5030 5476.

## Wakool Fishing Comp, Last weekend in March

One of the well-known fishing comps in the area. Keep an eye out locally for details closer to event. [www.wakoolfishingclassic.com](http://www.wakoolfishingclassic.com)

## Barham Easter Tennis

**Tournament, Easter weekend**  
Three day tournament held at Easter. For more Information phone 03 5453 1008.

## Goodnight Easter Tennis Tournament, Easter weekend

Saturday - Mens, Ladies, Juniors, doubles all day. Easter Sunday - Mixed doubles. Call the Tournament Secretary for more information, 03 5030 5531.

## Moulamein Easter Yabby Races and more, Easter weekend

Yabby Races, duck races, fishing comps, market stalls and more. Plenty for all to enjoy. Keep an eye out locally for more information closer to the event.

## Tooleybuc Jazz Weekend, Second weekend in April

Come along and experience Jazz at Tooleybuc. Music at its best - have a meal and just relax. Book some accommodation and stay all weekend. Phone 03 5030 5476.

## RVBA Division One Pennant State Championship, Last weekend in April

BDSM Bowls Club will host this feature event on the Royal Victorian Bowls Association calendar. Phone 03 5453 2159.

## How do I list my event?

Events will only be listed if details have been forwarded for the next edition. Even if your events are run annually it will not be included unless your club or organisation contacts Council with details to ensure they are current from year to year - this also gives the opportunity for smaller, non-annual events to submit details too. Please email your listings to [mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wakool.nsw.gov.au) - you may also include one picture of your event if you want. Shire Wire editions are Mid February, Mid May, Mid August, Mid November.

# Wakool's World of Works

A selected snapshot of some current projects and works by our Engineering Department...

## PROJECTS

- The next stage of reconstruction works for the East Barham Road renewal have commenced.
- The maintenance and repair report for sewer investigations has been received and a repair program is in the process of being developed.



A damaged guard rail at Yarrein Bridge on the Swan Hill Road was replaced as part of routine maintenance and renewal work.

- Stormwater pipe lining works have commenced as part of the Barham Stormwater Strategy.
- Works are underway for the Gonn Street Stormwater Gravity Project by Bell Environmental.
- Tenders have been called for the replacement of water reservoirs at Koraleigh and Murray Downs.
- Tenders are out for the next stage of the flood risk management plans, following the completion of the risk management study late last year.
- The Better Boating Program Steps and retaining wall works at Barham are on hold due to river levels.

## GENERAL

- The final stage of the reseal program will recommence in March on rural roads by Primal Seal.
- MR 94 and East Barham Road have both been sealed as part of the reseal program.
- Footpath and kerbing reworks throughout the Shire will begin in March/April.
- Road and bridge inspections are being conducted.
- Ongoing routine maintenance has been performed in each township of the Shire.
- Repairs and maintenance is also ongoing in all towns, including routine pavement patching and soft fall replacement.

## Timber bridge replacement program update

Works have been completed on the replacement of two bridges – Nacurrie Road North Bridge and Marunda Bridge, through Council's accelerated timber bridge replacement program. Sealing of the bridges' approaches is scheduled for April this year.

Works will also get underway this year on the replacement of three more bridges under the program – Coobool Island, Coobool Siding and Officers Road bridges.

Council has also submitted applications to the New South Wales Fixing Country Roads and the Federal Government's Bridges Renewal Programme to expand its bridge program, including the replacement of three more bridges.

It also has agreements in place to replace three bridges in the Waugorah area as part of the Nimmie-Caira project's Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program.



## YOUR COUNCILLORS



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## Also in this issue

Tooleybuc Bridge update

Economic Development news

Australia Day Awards



# APPLICATION TO BE MADE FOR SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Wakool Shire Council will make application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rate Variation of 7% (inclusive of rate pegging) for 2015/2016.

The application to IPART follows a Special Council Meeting on the 21st January where councillors considered a Special Rate Variation and various options.

Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey said the Special Rate Variation was in response to the freezing of indexation for Financial Assistance Grants over the next three years.

"Unfortunately, this freeze meant a loss of income for Council, which then affects the ability of the organisation to continue its service levels, including maintaining roads," Cr Gorey said.

He added that the proposed Special Rate Variation would only meet existing service levels and infrastructure to some degree.

"If the application to IPART is successful, the 7% Special Rate Variation for 2015/2016 will only maintain Council's existing service levels, there will still be a need to look at efficiencies across the organisation," he said.



Councillors discuss the Special Rate Variation at a meeting on the 21st January.

"This will include a review of Council operations across the board, including the areas of engineering, finance administration and organisational development."

Cr Gorey said the Special Rate Variation was also setting the scene for the NSW Government's Fit for the Future package, released following the Independent Local Government Review Panel's recommendations.

"As a Council, providing services to our communities and ensuring that our communities are represented is essential. We need to ensure that Council is in a good position throughout the Fit for the Future process, including pursuing Council's

of preferred option of becoming a Rural Council."

Community meetings regarding the Special Rate Variation and its options were held late last year in Barham, Wakool, Moulamein, Murray Downs and Tooleybuc. More than 130 community members attended the sessions.

Council will make application to IPART for the Special Rate Variation by the middle of February and expects a response to its application by the end of March.

If the application is successful, the 7% Special Rate Variation would commence in July 2015.



## Citizenship Ceremony

(L-R): Kristyanne Bercasio, Shova Thapa, Suresh Regmi, Shavya Regmi (front) and Thawanya Chisolm officially became Australian Citizens following a Citizenship Ceremony at the Barham Reception Centre on the 10th of December. The ceremony, attended by family members, friends and Council staff, was conducted by Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey (back, left).

## FOR YOUR INFO: COUNCIL MEETINGS

Locations of the monthly Council meetings will continue to rotate across the Shire for 2015.

## ORDINARY MEETINGS

Moulamein (18th February 2015)

Tooleybuc (18th March 2015)

Barham (15th April 2015)

Moulamein (13th May 2015) (Special Council Meeting)

Moulamein (20th May 2015)

Council's Ordinary Meetings start at 2pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend these monthly meetings. Council meetings agendas and minutes are available from the Barham or Moulamein Offices or on Council's website. If there's information you can't find, call our administrative services team on 03 5887 5007 and they will pass the information to you. If you're interested in addressing Council on any matter, this needs to be discussed with our Executive Assistant who can be contacted on 03 5887 5007 during business hours.



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Firstly, I would like to congratulate all the recipients of the Australia Day awards, including our Citizen(s) of the Year Ian and Rae James and Sportsperson of the Year Emma Berg.

Congratulations also to the Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Fishing Competition on being awarded the Community Event of the Year and the club's Reserves Premiership Team for Sporting Achievement of the Year.

It was great to see community members attend Australia Day celebrations across the Shire. I was fortunate to attend the Barham Australia Day celebrations, along with a great crowd and Gannawarra Ambassador Sue Stanley, to commemorate our national day.

I would also like to thank the Australia Day Ambassador Ron Delezio, who is founder of the Day of Difference Foundation.

It was a privilege handing out this year's Australia Day awards, and recognising those who have made exceptional contributions to our Shire.

### SENATOR NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES VISIT

Council had the recent honour of hosting the Federal Senator for NSW, Natasha MacLaren-Jones, who took the time to visit the Shire.

We had very positive discussions with the Senator on a number of topics, including the Barham Medical Centre, Fit for the Future and cross border issues. We also met with the owners of IGA in Barham, and discussed the impacts on local businesses of trading bans during public holidays.

Overall it was a very constructive visit and a great opportunity to inform and bring attention to the concerns facing Council and our communities, and I thank the Senator for her time.

### SPECIAL RATE VARIATION AND FIT FOR THE FUTURE

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our community members for attending and provide their input at the Special Rate Variation consultation sessions held late last year.

As mentioned elsewhere in this edition of Shire Wire, following its Special Meeting in January, Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a Special Rate Variation for 2015/2016 of 7% (including rate pegging).

When considering the Special Rate Variation, Council was very mindful of the impacts the 14% and 20% options would have on ratepayers. However, Council was also mindful of the impact of not having a Special Rate Variation and our ability to deliver Council services to our communities. The 7% Special Rate Variation will still only enable Council to meet current service levels and infrastructure. It will not provide extra income to Council; so there will still be a need for efficiency gains throughout the whole organisation.

As highlighted in this newsletter, we have to start positioning ourselves for the Fit for the Future program. The Special Rate Variation is critical to making sure Council is in a positive position as we continue with this process.

While Council is continuing to explore all options of the Fit for the Future program, its preferred model is the Rural Council option. This would see Council work with other similar-sized councils within the Mid-Murray Group, helping ensure service delivery to communities.

## Get active for NSW Seniors Week!

Running from Saturday the 14th to Sunday the 22nd of March, Wakool Shire Council HACC Services invites residents aged 60 years and above to participate, interact and be active during NSW Seniors Week 2015.

Seniors who register for the event also have the chance to win the lucky number prize.

A range of activities in Moulamein, Wakool, Tooleybuc and Barham are on offer for this year's Seniors Week, including carpet/lawn bowls, men and ladies' golf (nine or 18 holes), bike riding (three, five or 10kms) and a nature walk.

Other activities include a movie morning, gentle exercise and even a Google search at the Library. Seniors are invited to travel to other areas within the Shire to participate in an activity. People of all ages are welcome to be part of NSW Seniors Week.

Entries from seniors are also invited for the two-day art and craft display at Barham, to be held from Wednesday 17th to Thursday 18th of March. From coat hangers to art, quilting, knitting or crocheting, entries of all types of art and craft are encouraged. A Devonshire tea will be served on both days.

For more information regarding Seniors Week activities in the Wakool Shire, please call Shirley, Leanne or Heidi at HACC Services on 03 5453 3500.

## Economic Development news

### Murray Darling Basin Authority visit

Mayor Neil Gorey and Council's Economic Development Manager Gary Kerr hosted a visit to the Shire in January by Murray Darling Basin Authority (MBDA) Chief Executive Officer Rhondra Dickson, Board Member George Warne and The Living Murray Program Manager Sue Buckle.

The visit was organised to highlight the challenges the Shire is facing from environmental watering events and continuing reductions in water entitlements.



The recent environmental watering event in the Wakool River was discussed during Murray Darling Basin Authority CEO Rhondra Dickson's visit to the Shire.

As a result of the visit, Council and the MDBA will develop a collaborative program for a community based approach to developing the constraints business case for the Edward Wakool region over the next 12 to 18 months.

### Call for Tourism Operators to promote their businesses

At a meeting in Barham late last year regarding the Murray Regional Tourism's Digital Platform, many local tourism operators were unaware or were not registered with the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW). The ATDW is the principal database that all state and regional tourism organisations use in promoting regional and locations.

ATDW provides Tourism Operators with an avenue to increase their digital distribution and online exposure.

ATDW's distribution network is made up of a vast and growing number of digital channels who publish ATDW's content database, including Tourism Australia's www.Australia.com, a wide range of commercial websites like the popular Places We Go travel website, TripHitter, Regional Tourism Organisations, niche marketers and a growing number of smartphone and tablet applications.

If your operation is not on the ATDW (it is free to register) then you are missing out on valuable promotional opportunities. For details on how to register, email gary.kerr@wakool.nsw.gov.au

## Wakool Shire joins Small Business Friendly Council

Wakool Shire Council has joined Australia's first Small Business Friendly Council (SBFC) program, demonstrating its commitment to making small business a priority.

The NSW Office of the Small Business Commissioner (OSBC) has partnered with the NSW Business Chamber to develop the ground-breaking new program to increase the number of Councils working proactively with small businesses.

Councils that sign up to the SBFC program commit to improving the overall climate for small businesses in NSW and raise awareness of the difference Local Government can make by better engaging with small business.

Wakool Shire Council Mayor Neil Gorey said the program provided a great opportunity for Council to demonstrate its commitment to the lifeblood of its communities – small business owners and their employees.

"Small businesses are the powerhouse of our economy and it's vital we ensure they have ample opportunity for growth and sustainability through improved relationships with Council," Cr Gorey said.

"Through the SBFC program, the OSBC and the NSW Business Chamber will work closely and collaboratively with us so we are better placed to support and promote our local small businesses."

By participating in the SBFC Program, Council is required to commit to a charter which sets out a number of benchmarks that foster and supports small businesses in its area.



Barham Consolidated congratulates Mayor Neil Gorey on Wakool Shire joining Australia's first Small Business Friendly Council program. (L-R) Barham Consolidated Vice-President Kent Bassett, President Colin Membrey, Cr Neil Gorey, Treasurer Faye Ashwin and Secretary Gary Kerr.

## Tooleybuc Bridge update

Roads and Maritime Services in partnership with VicRoads, has started planning for a new bridge at Tooleybuc.

Following feedback from the community, three route options have been selected for further investigation. All options connect to Murray Street.

- Yellow option – a high level bridge downstream of the existing bridge.
- Blue option – a low level bridge with a lift span immediately next to and upstream of the existing bridge.
- Purple option – a low level bridge with a lift span upstream of the existing bridge (based on the previous high level orange option).

Together with VicRoads, Roads and Maritime continue to carry out specialist studies around these three options.

Noise and vibration and socio-economic assessments have been completed, as has a flood modelling study, while Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Flora and Fauna Assessments are almost complete.

An urban design study looked at the landscape and the visual impact of each bridge option. An architectural firm was also engaged regarding ideas around the old Tooleybuc Bridge, including a potential wharf.

Following the studies, Roads and Maritime will present their results and their preferred bridge option at a community consultation session, expected to take place by May 2015. A 3D 'fly-through' animation for bridge options will be available for viewing in time for the community session.

Further details regarding the studies and the consultation session will be in the next edition of Shire Wire due out in mid-May.

The Murray River Bridge at Tooleybuc is part of the NSW Government's Bridges for Bush initiative.

## Club Grants available

Did you know that there is a local funding scheme available Shire wide?

ClubGRANTS is a funding scheme for community groups which allows clubs with an annual gaming revenue of over \$1 million to apply a percentage of gaming taxes to specific community projects.

In particular it emphasises local projects, so CluBarham, Tooleybuc Sporting Club and Murray Downs Golf and Country Club have formed links with Wakool Shire Council to decide how to allocate their funds to a wide range of causes.

Below is some useful information about the ClubGRANTS funding scheme and how you can apply.

### Funding Categories

**Category 1** funding applications are received by the clubs directly on an ongoing basis. Projects in the following categories qualify for Category 1 funding:

- Community welfare and social services
- Community development
- Community health services
- Employment assistance activities

**Category 2** funding is for other community development and support services that are not eligible for category 1 funding (e.g. traditional areas of club expenditure, such as support for sport and recreation groups). Requests for Category 2 funding should be put in writing and include the amount requested and what it will be used for.

To find out more about the scheme contact your local club (CluBarham, Murray Downs Golf & Country Club, Tooleybuc Sporting Club) directly or visit [www.clubsnsw.com.au](http://www.clubsnsw.com.au) for details

## Australia Day Awards

Wakool Shire residents joined in the nation's biggest celebration at the annual Australia Day breakfasts last month.

Community members gathered at events held in Barham, Koraleigh, Moulamein, Wakool and Tooleybuc to celebrate Australia Day and recognise the achievements of local residents who have made an outstanding contribution to the Shire.

Four Australia Day Awards were presented on the Day:

- Citizen of the Year – Ian and Rae James
- Sportsperson of the Year – Emma Berg
- Community Event of the Year – Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Fishing Competition
- Sporting Achievement of the Year – Koondrook Barham Football Netball Club Reserves Premiership Team

Australia Day Ambassador Ron Delezio, Founder of Day of Difference Foundation, presented the Citizen of the Year award.

"It is great to be able to again recognise just some of the people and clubs that make a mark on our area through these awards," Mayor Neil Gorey said.

"We have an amazing amount of volunteers in our Shire that showcase our area's potential

and positive spirit. Their efforts add to the story of Wakool Shire and make it a great place to be a part of."

Congratulations again to all award recipients from Wakool Shire Councillors and staff.



Australia Day Citizen of the Year recipients Ian and Rae James, pictured with Australia Day Ambassador Ron Delezio and wife Carolyn.

## Wakool Shire Medicine & Allied Health Scholarship

Applications are now open for the 2015 Wakool Shire Medicine & Allied Health Scholarship Scheme.

The Scholarship is an initiative of Local Health Medical Trust and is funded and administered in partnership with Wakool Shire Council. It is designed to assist students to study undergraduate or postgraduate degrees in Medicine or Allied Health sciences.

One scholarship will be awarded in 2015 with the recipient receiving \$6,000 towards their living and studying expenses.

Wakool Shire Mayor Cr Neil Gorey said the purpose of the scholarship is to support local students and encourage their return to rural areas upon accreditation to practice in their chosen field.

"Scholarships can take extra pressure off those looking to undertake these types of studies and in turn provide more opportunities for students to focus on applying their studies back into the local area on university breaks, on scheduled visits as arranged by the Trust and then hopefully as a career choice at the end.

"I'd encourage those currently enrolled in a medicine or allied health course to apply for the scholarship," he said.

Applications are now open for students enrolled in one of the following eligible disciplines for 2015:

Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Physiotherapy, Social Work, Psychology and other mental health professions, Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Podiatry, Pharmacy, Optometry, Paramedicine, Dietetics or Medical Imaging.

Those who can demonstrate current or previous residency in Wakool Shire will be given preference.

Applications close on 31st March, 2015.

Previous applicants may apply. Previous scholarship recipients are also eligible to apply however a points discount will be applied through the assessment process.

For further information or to download an application form visit: [www.wakool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wakool.nsw.gov.au).



## Fit for the Future update

The NSW Government has acknowledged that rural communities need a new approach to local governance that recognises their unique challenges and characteristics.

Wakool Shire Council has noted the flexibility incorporated into the Rural Council template, developed for smaller councils as an optional inclusion when preparing their Fit for the Future proposals. The template, which was developed following workshops with smaller councils within NSW, recognises that one size local government model does not fit all.

Mayor Neil Gorey said Wakool Shire was keen to understand how a Rural Council might work within the context of a mid-Murray joint organisation.

"We are particularly keen to explore options for shared services and building on our Centres of Excellence approach in areas such as Planning, Building and Environmental Health, Financial Services (including payroll) and road/bridge construction," Cr Gorey said.

"Wakool Shire Council will carefully consider its options in coming months and will make its submission to Office of Local Government before the end of June 2015."

Council will continue to meet with other mid-Murray councils (Murray, Jerilderie, Deniliquin, Conargo and Berrigan Shires) and will participate in a facilitated workshop to explore all options.

The Fit for the Future package was released following a three-year independent review of local government in New South Wales.

Among the Independent Local Government Review Panel's recommendations was the consideration of councils to merge, to become a Rural Council or to establish regional Joint Organisations.

For more information regarding Fit for the Future visit [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au).