

Councillors' feedback...feedback...



Willoughby City Council has introduced monthly information seminars, providing the community with a forum to hear

about significant issues and projects. Held up to ten times a year on the fourth Monday of the month, each seminar will feature topics presented by an expert from Council, State Government or other agency. The information seminars are a new and innovative approach to Council's community engagement, providing people with in-depth, timely information on issues that really matter.

The topic for each seminar will be announced one week prior. To receive updates on what will be covered, sign up to Council's e-newsletter or visit our website. A video of each presentation will be available to download from Council's website for those who are unable to attend.

This financial year it will spend \$500,000 improving landscaping, footpaths and street furniture at Wilkes Avenue in Artarmon. This will improve pedestrian safety and make the area more attractive. It is expected that the work will begin after Christmas and be complete by July 2020. The Wilkes Avenue dining precinct has also recently been declared a Non Smoking zone.

Willoughby City Council is committed to providing recreational space. The \$800,000 Artarmon Oval surface upgrade includes renewing drainage and irrigation and replacing the oval surface. This will create a higher quality playing surface and allow increased use. The oval will be closed from the beginning of September and will be back in use at the start of the winter sporting season in 2020.

In 2015, the Artarmon Bowling Club approached Council requesting that Council purchase the site due to declining membership numbers, worsening condition of the facility and a desire to ensure the site always remained available for public recreational use. Since purchasing the site in January 2016, Council has

undertaken extensive research and community consultation to determine a use for the site that would best benefit the entire community.

After careful consideration, Council has twice voted to demolish the club and build a new multi-purpose community pavilion in its place. The pavilion will incorporate accessible toilets providing an all-weather, non-restricted space for the community. The site is part of the Artarmon Parkland Masterplan that includes public open space and new playgrounds.

Council has been working on the bridge on Artarmon Road between Cooney Road and Sydney Street – and it is almost finished. The project included removal of the traffic island, waterproofing of the bridge deck and concrete repairs to the underside of the bridge. New footpaths and kerb and gutter were installed. The bridge has now reopened. The last stage of the works is to improve pedestrian safety with fresh balustrading and minor works under the bridge. That will start in early September and will take about one week.

Like many construction projects, they do not progress without inconvenience. We are aware reduced traffic flow and closure of the cycleway impacted many people and we thank you for your patience. We are pleased that the life and safety of the bridge has been extended for many years to come.

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Community Information Seminars

Council's new Community Information Seminars offer an opportunity for the locals

to hear about important and relevant issues and projects. This new initiative will now be held up to ten times a year on the fourth Monday of each month. Each seminar will feature topics presented by an expert from Council, state government or other agency. Attendants will be invited to ask questions at the end of the presentation.

I would encourage everyone to utilise this service as it gives us the chance to be updated by the Willoughby City Council on what is happening around us and any new projects that will be coming up. If you miss the presentation, you can download the video and watch it later. Sign up to Council's e-newsletter to be notified of upcoming topics.

Smoke Free Zones

On 24 June 2019, Council declared Wilkes Avenue Artarmon and the associated laneway behind the old Artarmon Library smoke free zones. This was as a result of a petition containing 256 signatures from supporting citizens as well as eight local businesses. Council rangers will soon be enforcing the ban on smoking

Community Fun Day St Basil's Anglican Church

6 Broughton Road, Artarmon

Saturday 19 October 2019

10.00am-2:30pm

Bring along your friends and family
and join with the local community for a day of fun,
food, games, arts and craft.

There will be food and drinks stalls, kids games, craft
tables, a jumping castle and a mini petting zoo.

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and new signs will alert smokers to the restrictions. There will be on-the-spot fines of \$110 for noncompliance. A public awareness and education campaign organised by the Council will run for three months before penalty notices begin to be issued. This hopefully will see a substantial decrease in the number of cigarette butts littering Wilkes Avenue and an improved dining and entertaining environment.

Artarmon Parklands Renewal

Council has endorsed the demolition of the former Artarmon Bowling Clubhouse and its replacement with a community pavilion. The pavilion will include accessible toilets which will enhance the accessibility for people with disability, parents with prams and young children. The cost is estimated to be \$825,000 and will be 100% funded by Council.

Council's Local Studies Librarian will photograph and catalogue items of historical significance prior to demolition of the Clubhouse. Any commemorative plaques, honour boards and items of historical values will also be removed and preserved prior to demolition.

The old Artarmon Bowling Club land and the existing Artarmon Reserve are now managed as one property and renamed the Artarmon Parklands and will consist of the Artarmon Oval, a children's playground, the new community pavilion, the community

gardens and the existing bush walks along Wickham Walk from the Artarmon railway station to the oval and from the oval to Artarmon Road. There will be family picnic areas, space for children's birthday parties and community gatherings.

Please share with me your thoughts. I welcome feedback on any current issues.

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Long Term Financial Plan

One of areas I am most proud to have contributed to during my time on Council is the strong financial position

of our Council. There are 129 Councils in NSW – and the Audit Office of NSW has ranked Willoughby City Council in the top 5. This incredible achievement rests on the strong financial management and controls that Council has adopted over the last couple of years, and provides a secure platform from which our community can prosper and grow.

Over the next ten years, Council has an ambitious, yet financially responsible, program of major projects that will improve our suburbs and community. The commitments I made during the last election to fight

for funding for local streetscape and shopping precinct improvements have been secured, and millions more will be spent upgrading our local parks, sporting facilities, libraries and childcare centres. I thank all the residents who have contributed ideas to these plans, and encourage those with ideas to reach out – my contact details are below.

Smoke Free Wilkes Avenue

In mid-June 2019, a couple of local residents contacted me asking for my help to make Council investigate the possibility of creating a smoke free zone around the restaurants in Wilkes Avenue Artarmon. These residents had been eating dinner and were turned off by the clouds of smoke that wafting into the alfresco dining areas and decided to let me know. At the next Council meeting, I submitted this change of policy to Council and two weeks later the new "No Smoking" signs were erected.

The reason I mention this is to remind you that sometimes all you need to do is reach out and let me know how I can help. Unsurprisingly, some of the most positive changes in our community have come from ideas from residents, because these are the people who know the area best.

Council Meetings

Recently Council has decided to move from holding two meetings a month, to one. This was a decision that was hotly debated at Council, and I was disappointed with the change. Council meetings provide an opportunity for the community to address Council, but also hear the rationale behind our decisions – it is this debate and the transparency that helps guide good governance. In place of a second meeting, Council will now hold Community Information Seminars on a variety of topics. Questions can be asked, and if you miss the presentation, you can download the video from Council's website and watch it later.

To be notified of upcoming topics, please sign up to my newsletter at www.nicwright.com

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Local Community Choir seeks new members

Come and join your local community choir.

The 'Local Vocals' meet every Tuesday in Northbridge.

Our Choir Master is a singing teacher and professional singer.

It has been proven that singing in a choir increases your dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin and Endorphin levels – the quartet responsible for your happiness and wellbeing.

For more information please call Louise on 0452 006 693