



Geelong Regional Library Corporation

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Thursday 17 September 2026, 5:30pm

MS Teams – Online



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SECTION A - PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Geelong Regional Library Corporation acknowledges the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin nation, and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples of the Maar nations as the Original Owners of the lands on which our library services operate. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and celebrate First Nations Peoples of this land as the custodians of learning, literacy, knowledge and story.

2. ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS	
Cr Liz Pattison (Chair)	Surf Coast Shire
Cr Elise Wilkinson (Deputy Chair)	City of Greater Geelong
Cr Emma Sinclair	City of Greater Geelong
Cr Rowan D. Story AM RFD	City of Greater Geelong
Cr Trent Sullivan	City of Greater Geelong
Cr Mick McCrickard	Colac Otway Shire
Cr Owen Sharkey	Golden Plains Shire
Cr Isabelle Tolhurst	Borough of Queenscliffe
COUNCIL OFFICERS	
Damian Waight	General Manager, Community Life, SCS
Amie Higgs	Manager Community Participation, CoGG
Ian Seuren	General Manager Development & Community Services, COS
Jonathan Daly	Director of Community, Planning and Growth, GPS
Abbey Tatterson	Manager, Customer Experience, Borough of Queenscliffe
GRLC OFFICERS	
David Semmens	Chief Executive Officer
Skye Wilson	Director, People, Culture and Strategic Engagement
Deanne Verity	Acting, Director, Community Experience
Daniyal Ali	Manager, Finance and Governance
Tanya Robertson	Executive Assistant
GUESTS	
Anoja Bandara	Acting Manager, Financial Audit Victorian Auditor-General's Office

3. APOLOGIES

4. INTERESTS, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES DATED 27 AUGUST 2026

Recommendation

That the draft minutes of the Board Meeting held 27 August 2026 be confirmed.

SECTION B – REPORTS

6. GRLC ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2025-2026 (CONFIDENTIAL)

David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer

Anoja Bandara, Acting Manager, Financial Audit Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Recommendation

That the Board:

1. Receives the final audit report and management letter from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.
2. Notes the changes made to the draft Financial Statements since the Board meeting of 27 August 2026.
3. Approves and adopts the audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026.
4. Authorises the Chair Cr Pattison and Deputy Chair Cr Elise Wilkinson to sign the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 on behalf of the Board.
5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to incorporate the adopted Financial Statements into the 2025-26 Annual Report.

7. DRAFT GRLC ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer

Recommendation

That the Board:

1. Adopts the Draft GRLC Annual Report 2025-2026, incorporating the audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026.
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to insert the VAGO certificate, make any minor editorial, formatting or administrative amendments required prior to publication, provided such amendments do not materially alter the content of the report.
3. Authorises submission of the Annual Report 2025-2026 to the Minister for Local Government in accordance with legislative requirements.
4. Authorises publication of the required public notice advising that the Annual Report has been prepared and is available for inspection.

Purpose

To seek Board adoption of the Annual Report 2025-2026 and approval for its submission to the Minister for Local Government.

Background

The Local Government Act 1989 requires Regional Library Corporations to prepare an Annual Report each financial year. The report must include a report of operations, audited financial statements, and details regarding performance against, and implementation of, the Library Plan 2025-2029.

Key Points

The Annual Report demonstrates a strong commencement of the Library Plan 2025-2029 and highlights achievements delivered during its first year of implementation.

The report celebrates the organisation's achievements in 2025-26 and highlights our continued commitment to delivering high-quality public library services and programs to our communities. It also recognises the essential role libraries play during times of cost-of-living pressures, social isolation, and increasing reliance on digital and online services.

The report includes:

- A message from Cr Liz Pattison, Chair of the Board, and David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer.
- A feature section, Impact Behind Our Numbers, which provides a snapshot of GRLC's role and impact beyond traditional library services and the borrowing of books (pages 8-9).
- **Encouraging Personal Curiosity:** highlights how our services promote curiosity, learning and connection; the programs, events and activations delivered both within and beyond library branches; initiatives supporting reading, literacy and lifelong learning; celebrations of local history and culture; and community partnerships across the region (pages 19-25).
- **Evolving Customer Experiences:** outlines key initiatives including the Birregurra Library Kiosk, consultation on future mobile library services, and the expanded use of unstaffed library access (pages 26-29).
- **Enhancing Community Wellbeing:** showcases the diversity of the library collection, Library of Things and digital resources; initiatives delivered through the Geelong Heritage Centre; and partnerships with the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) to support community cohesion initiatives across the network (pages 30-35).
- **Embracing Our Future:** highlights strategic initiatives undertaken during the year to position GRLC for long-term success, including development of a new governance proposal, implementation of finance and payroll systems, and investment in staff capability, wellbeing and safety (pages 36-41).
- A snapshot and key highlight from each major service point (pages 42–55).
- Our People and Performance, including statistics to measure our activities (pages 55-75)
- **Our Financials.** The 2025-26 Annual Financial Statements as reviewed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO).

Engagement

The Annual Report is more than a statutory compliance requirement. It provides an opportunity to reflect on and recognise the achievements delivered across the organisation during 2025-26.

Employees from across the network contributed to the report, including Library Coordinators and members of the Strategic Leadership Team, ensuring a comprehensive and accurate reflection of GRLC's activities and achievements.

The report highlights the collective efforts of staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders in delivering positive outcomes for our communities.

Publication

The Local Government Act 1989 requires a copy of the Annual Report to be submitted to the Minister for Local Government and for public notice to be provided advising that the report has been prepared and is available for inspection.

Following adoption, the Annual Report will be published on the GRLC website and made available to the community.

Attachment C: Draft GRLC Annual Report 2025-2026

8. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – AUGUST 2026 (CONFIDENTIAL)

David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer

Recommendation

That the Monthly Financial Report - August 2026 be noted.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting **Thursday 26 November 2026 5:30-7:30pm**

Location **GRLC Boardroom, Level 4**

10. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD HELD 27 AUGUST 2026

11. ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT C: DRAFT GRLC ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

Annual Report located on GRLC website <https://www.grlc.vic.gov.au/>

Geelong Regional Library Corporation

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday 27 August 2026, 5:30pm

Board Members & Officers only

Geelong Library and Heritage Centre Boardroom
& MS Teams



SECTION A - PROCEDURAL MATTERS

At **5.35pm** GRLC Chair, Cr Liz Pattison opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

The meeting was held both online and in-person at the Geelong Library & Heritage Centre.

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cr Pattison acknowledged the Traditional Owners of this land and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

'The Geelong Regional Library Corporation acknowledges the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin nation, and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples of the Maar nations as the Original Owners of the lands on which our library services operate. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and celebrate First Nations Peoples of this land as the custodians of learning, literacy, knowledge and story.'

2. ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS		ATTENDANCE		
Name	Council	In Person	Online	Apology
Cr Liz Pattison (Chair)	Surf Coast Shire	X		
Cr Elise Wilkinson (Deputy Chair)	City of Greater Geelong	X		
Cr Emma Sinclair	City of Greater Geelong		X	
Cr Rowan D. Story AM RFD	City of Greater Geelong			X
Cr Trent Sullivan	City of Greater Geelong			X
Cr Mick McCrickard	Colac Otway Shire		X	
Mayor Owen Sharkey	Golden Plains Shire	X		
Cr Isabelle Tolhurst	Borough of Queenscliffe		X	
COUNCIL OFFICERS				
Damian Waight	General Manager Community Life, SCS		X	
Amie Higgs	Manager Community Participation, CoGG	X		
Ian Seuren	General Manager Dev & Com Serv, COS			X
Jonathan Daly	Dir Community, Planning & Growth, GPS		X	
Abbey Tatterson	Manager Customer Experience, BoQ		X	



GRLC OFFICERS				
David Semmens	Chief Executive Officer	X		
Skye Wilson	Director, People, Culture & Strategic Eng		X	
Deanne Verity	Acting, Director, Community Experience	X		
Daniyal Ali	Manager, Finance & Governance		X	
Dr Lucy Davies	Manager Heritage Services	X		
Tanya Robertson	Executive Assistant		X	
GUESTS				
Anoja Bandara	Acting Manager, Financial Audit VAGO		X	

3. APOLOGIES

Cr Rowan D. Story AM RFD
Cr Trent Sullivan

4. INTERESTS, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Isabelle Tolhurst declared a material conflict of interest as a paid staff member of the Queenscliff Literary Festival. A disclosure form has been completed. No agenda items required management of the conflict at this meeting, the declaration will be noted for future relevant matters.

Conflict of Interest Declared & Noted

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES DATED 25 JUNE 2026

Recommendation

That the draft minutes of the Board Meeting held 25 June 2026 be confirmed.

Moved: Cr. Owen Sharkey
Second: Cr. Elise Wilkinson
Passed: Unanimously



SECTION B – PRESENTATIONS

6. DRAFT ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2025–2026 (CONFIDENTIAL)

David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer

Anoja Bandara | Acting Manager, Financial Audit Victorian Auditor-General's Office
(Presenting the Draft Closing Report)

Recommendation

That the:

1. Draft Annual Financial Statements 2025-2026 be adopted by the Board, pending no material variations from the final audit and opinion by VAGO.
2. Adopted Annual Financial Statements 2025-2026 be included in the draft GRLC Annual report and presented at the September Board meeting.
3. Chair Cr Pattison, Deputy Chair Cr Elise Wilkinson and Cr Owen Sharkey be nominated to sign the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2026.

Decision

Moved: Cr. Elise Wilkinson
Second: Cr. Owen Sharkey
Passed: Unanimously

7. HERITAGE SERVICES PLAN 2025-2029 – YEAR 1 UPDATE

Dr Lucy Davies, Manager Heritage Services

Recommendation

That the Heritage Services Plan Update be noted.

The report noted positive progress in the first year of the Heritage Services Plan, including the digitisation and preservation of significant local collections, improved access to heritage materials, and a focus on documenting underrepresented stories.

Progress in embedding trauma-informed practices, expanding access through outreach and research workshops and enhancing collection descriptions was also outlined, particularly for First Nations materials, and preserving rare and special collections with support from university student placements.



Funding challenges for digitisation and preservation projects was discussed including the prioritisation of the Geelong Advertiser photographic negatives due to their historical significance and risk of deterioration.

The Board acknowledged the value of the work being undertaken and the contribution of student placement programs to advancing key projects.

SECTION C – REPORTS

8. LIBRARY PLAN 2025–2029 YEAR 1 UPDATE

Deanne Verity, Acting, Director, Community Experience

Recommendation

That the Library Plan 2025–2029 Year 1 Update report be noted.

The report noted strong progress in the first year of the Library Plan 2025–29, with implementation well underway across the Plan's strategic priorities. Achievements during the year have supported key objectives including strengthening digital literacy, improving access to local and First Nations heritage collections, enhancing community connection and inclusion, and building workforce capability. The year has focused on establishing a solid foundation and building momentum for delivery of initiatives over the remaining years of the Plan.

Positive performance across key indicators indicated increasing customer satisfaction, library visitation remaining stable, and membership levels holding steady. Overall, the results demonstrate a successful first year and provide a strong platform for continued progress.

9. TURNING THE PAGE – PROJECT UPDATE (CONFIDENTIAL)

David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer

Recommendation

That the Turning the Page report be noted.

10. ACTIVITY REPORT 2025-2026 FY (CONFIDENTIAL)

Deanne Verity, Acting Director Community Experience

Recommendation

That the Activity Report 2025-2026 report be noted.



11. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)

Skye Wilson, Director, People, Culture and Strategic Engagement

Recommendation

That the Health Safety and Wellbeing Report be noted.

12. CEO REPORT

David Semmens, Chief Executive Officer

Recommendation

That the CEO Report be noted.

The report notes key highlights, activities, and projects demonstrating several key achievements.

This includes events such as the Local Authors Fair held at Geelong Library as part of the Local Word Writers Festival. Approximately 25 local authors are expected to participate, with around 100 people already registered to attend. The initiative follows a series of writers' workshops delivered across the library network and provides an opportunity to support and promote local writers.

The report also provided an update on the Humanforce project, which will introduce new payroll, rostering, timesheet and leave management systems. The system is scheduled to go live on 7 September and represents a significant organisational change affecting all employees. The report acknowledged the considerable work undertaken by the project team at GRLC and an appreciation was also expressed to the City of Greater Geelong Payroll Team for its collaborative and professional support during the migration of payroll data.

The Board formally congratulated David on his appointment as Chief Executive Officer and acknowledged his leadership during the Acting CEO period and throughout the recruitment process. Members expressed confidence in his leadership as the organisation progresses through the significant governance and organisational changes ahead. David thanked the Board for its confidence and noted his commitment to supporting the organisation through the transition while continuing to deliver high-quality library services.



13. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked Board members for their participation and formally closed the meeting.

Meeting ended 7:20pm

Next Meeting: Thursday 17 September 2026 5:30-7:30pm (Online Only)

Location: Teams

Signed:

Cr Liz Pattison
Chair

Date of Confirmation: / / 2026