



# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE GEELONG REGIONAL LIBRARY CORPORATION

Thursday 4 December 2025  
Board Members and Officers only  
(MS TEAMS)

*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.*





## SECTION A - PROCEDURAL MATTERS

At 5.39pm GRLC Chair, Cr Liz Pattison opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

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

### 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

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Board members raised the topic of reviewing governance rules due to recent issues with meeting quorum, noting that there were two instances this year where quorum was not met, which prompted questions about whether the current setup requiring every member council to have their representative present is optimal or contemporary.

The CEO indicated that the timing for any changes would align with the broader governance transition, as the new constitution and partnership agreement present an opportunity to update governance practices.

The Chair expressed gratitude to Martin Gill for his effective support as CEO of the Borough of Queenscliff, specifically his close collaboration with the team to deliver a beautifully refurbished library that opened in September 2022.

The Chair and CEO also thanked Gayatri Baskaran - Finance Coordinator from City of Great Geelong for providing finance support to the library since 2021 particularly with the Annual VAGO Audit process and with the day-to-day finances.





## 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 Tolburst	Borough of Queenscliffe	x		
Cr Gavin Gamble (Proxy)	Golden Plains Shire	x		
COUNCIL OFFICERS				
Damian Waight	General Manager Community Life, SCS			x
Amie Higgs	Manager Community Participation, CoGG			x
Anthony Basford	Executive Director, City Life, CoGG	x		
Gayatri Baskaran	Finance Coordinator, CoGG	x		
Ian Seuren	General Manager, Development Community Services COS		x	
Lynnere Gray	Director Corporate Services, GPS		x	
GRLC OFFICERS				
Vanessa Schernickau	Chief Executive Officer	x		
Skye Wilson	Director, People, Culture and Strategic Engagement		x	
David Semmens	Director, Community Experience	x		
Robbie Collins	Director, Digital and Finance	x		
Vanessa Rechichi	Executive Assistant		x	

## 3. APOLOGIES

*Cr Trent Sullivan, Damian Waight, Cr Owen Sharkey, Amie Higgs*





#### **4. INTERESTS, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

#### **5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES DATED 2 October 2025 (ATTACHMENT 1)**

**Recommendation:**

That the draft minutes of the Board Meeting held 2 October be confirmed.

Moved: Cr Emma Sinclair  
Second: Cr Elise Wilkinson  
Passed: Unanimously

### **SECTION B – PRESENTATIONS**

**N/A**

### **SECTION C – REPORTS**

#### **1. CHAIR ELECTION (CONFIDENTIAL)**

Vanessa Schernickau, Chief Executive Officer

The Board elected Anthony Basford to be the temporary chair to conduct the vote.





## 2. BOARD OVERVIEW AND AGENDA 2026

Vanessa Schernickau, Chief Executive Officer

### Recommendation

That the Board Overview and Agenda 2026 be approved.

Moved: Cr Isabelle Tolhurst  
Second: Cr Elise Wilkinson  
Passed: Unanimously

## 3. REVISED INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION

Robbie Cullen, Director Digital and Finance

### Recommendation

The Board approve the revised Instrument of Delegation.

The revised Instrument of Delegation is aligned with new processes prompted by the migration of financial systems from the City of Geelong, under a fee for service arrangement, to in-house.

The procurement policy and reporting requirements remain in place for significant contracts and expenditures.

Moved: Cr Isabelle Tolhurst  
Second: Cr Emma Sinclair  
Passed: Unanimously

## 4. Turning The Page – Governance Transition (CONFIDENTIAL)

David Semmens, Director Community Experience

### Recommendation

That the Turning the Page report be noted.





## **5. PROJECT OPTIMUS – Finance and Human Capital Management Systems (CONFIDENTIAL)**

Robbie Cullen, Director Digital and Finance

### **Recommendation**

That the Project Optimus Update report be noted.

## **6. MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)**

Robbie Cullen, Director Digital and Finance

### **Recommendation**

That the Monthly Finance report be noted.

## **7. DIGITAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

Robbie Cullen, Director Digital and Finance

### **Recommendation**

That the Digital Strategy update be noted.

The update summarised the progress made in the first two years of the strategy and outlined upcoming projects, including a new website and event booking software.





## 8. COLLECTIONS STRATEGY UPDATE

Robbie Cullen, Director Digital and Finance

### Recommendation

That the Collections Strategy update be noted.

The report highlighted the quality of the opening day collection for Biyal'a Armstrong Creek Library and the opportunity to strategically enrich the collection, noting that the early years collection is already oversubscribed.

The strategy focussed on building a diverse, inclusive, and responsive collection for community needs.

Achievements include tailored collections for new libraries, "Read Now" for high-demand books, and increased dyslexia-friendly resources.

The Board raised the question about the BorrowBox platform and compatibility with devices including Kindles and Kobo. Further information will be provided to the Board.

*Cr Rowan Story left the meeting 6.30pm.*

## 9. COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING UPDATE

Skye Wilson, Director People, Culture and Strategic Engagement

### Recommendation

That the Communications and Marketing update report be noted.

The report focussed on libraries' visibility, digital engagement, and the upcoming launch of the new website and digital asset management framework.

The Digital Asset Management platform launches in December and will organise and govern photos, videos, and design assets, improving consistency and privacy management.





The Board raised a question about the approximate number of e-news subscribers, and this was taken on notice.

The CEO confirmed the PLV state budget submission will be sent to CEOs and Mayors early next year, featuring local library photos and advocating for a new funding model related to growth and early years literacy.

CEO to circulate the PLV submission to the Board.

*Ian Seuren left the meeting at 6.57pm*

## **10. ACCESS & INCLUSION ANNUAL UPDATE (CONFIDENTIAL)**

Skye Wilson, Director People, Culture and Strategic Engagement

### **Recommendation**

That the Access & Inclusion update report be noted.

## **11. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)**

David Semmens, Director Community Engagement

### **Recommendation**

That the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report be noted.





## 12. CEO REPORT

Vanessa Schernickau, Chief Executive Officer

### Recommendation

That the CEO Report be noted.

The CEO update highlighted the Geelong Library's 10-year anniversary, with over 3 million visitors and 35,400 new members during that period, including COVID closures. A morning tea and exhibition on the ground floor acknowledged this milestone and vision of the City of Greater Geelong.

Chilwell Library redevelopment is progressing, though completion may be delayed due to asbestos and telecommunications issues; community remain engaged with the team through pop-up events.

We received a Commonwealth funded Community Cohesion grant for Corio and Colac, supporting social connection and resilience programming.

The CEO discussed the management of recent events, including Tony Abbott's author event and the Talk it Up forum on Mis and Disinformation. The detailed planning and security measures were highlighted.

The CEO to share the ['Talk it Up'](#) Event link when it is available to the Board. The link is available here.

## 13. ACTIVITY REPORT DECEMBER (CONFIDENTIAL)

David Semmens, Director Community Experience

### Recommendation

That the Activity Report be noted.





## Other Business:

Discussion about the number of copies of the URIC (Uluru Statement from the Heart) held by the library, clarifying that three copies are available and more may be coming from the State Library where the original copy is held.

There was a question about the Talk it Up forum, with positive feedback on the panel and discussion.

The team reflected on the significance of hosting two major events during the same week with diverse views and the role of public libraries to promote civic debate and open discussion.

The importance of reviewing governance rules and ensuring quorum for future board meetings was noted, with appreciation for proactive attendance management.

## Next Meeting:

**Thursday 26 February 2026 Board Workshop 1 – 4pm**

**Thursday 26 February 2026 Board meeting from 5 – 7pm**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Cr Liz Pattison  
Chair

Date of Confirmation: 01 / 04 / 2026

