GEELONG REGIONAL LIBRARIES

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: 23 / 11 / 2026