

# VOTE 1 - KIERAN KENNEDY

**Working for you & with you**



As a long term resident of Venus Bay I bring local knowledge, issues, directions and aspirations of the community to the council table. For example the biggest issue to confront us for a generation is the foreshadowed exploration and future extraction of coal seam gas.

At the direction of our farming and township communities i have strongly led council, resulting in the Victorian State Government declaring a moratorium for a proposed ban on BTEX chemicals (benzene, toluene, ethybenzene & xylene) to prevent any irreversible damage to our aquifers, water resources, food security & tourism sectors so vital for future generations as our generations expected and grew up with.

I bring the same knowledge and aspirations to the council table on all matters however large. This includes how to lodge a customer request form and working with communities to earmark future community driven projects to ensure a positive outcome & implementation.

The most frequently asked question to me is where do my rates go? As an example, the 2012 – 2013 budget, council will spend \$5.79 million on our roads \$1.43 million on footpaths & access tracks, which include the extension of the Tarwin Lower – Venus Bay bike walking track into the Venus Bay shops. This will enable residents and visitors to safely walk or ride from the Tarwin Lower bridge through to the Venus Bay shops all the way to beach number 1.

There's \$2.5 million for drains, culverts, guard rails & playground equipment and \$1.46 million for buildings such as aquatic facilities.

There is annual maintenance budget averages equal to approximately \$1 million for all 400 council owned structures. This includes but is not limited to buildings, rotundas, public toilets, public halls, swimming pool infrastructures, public libraries, community centres, depots, council offices, museums, court houses, caravan park buildings, sport stadiums, pre-schools, children centres, tennis clubs and senior citizen buildings.

The shire essential services maintenance budget for items such as fire extinguishers, exit lighting, emergency lighting for example storm maintenance, is approximately \$300,000.

The generous community grants programme is now up to \$359,000. Furthermore community groups can apply for small equipment grants of up to \$5,000 annually that are assessed on a monthly rotation. This is a fantastic addition to one of the most significant community grants programmes in rural shires.

Council road maintenance is particularly expensive with end to end sealed roads that are the equivalent to a road trip from Leongatha to Sydney, and councils unsealed roads equivalent to a road trip from Leongatha to Port Augusta South Australia. The cost to resheet unsealed roads is (approx) \$4.50 per square meter.

Whilst not forgetting all council rate revenue comes from a mere 18,956 properties I invite you to compare our population and size to your city or semi-rural based municipalities and assess the facts.

Other expenditures include shire staff wages 53% (approx) of the annual budget. One could measure this large percentage against creating local employment within the shire including our youth. I am also working towards securing the required numbers to reduce the ridiculous costs of consultants thus offsetting these expenses directly against rate rises over the next four years. Federal and state government grants are essential to local government however their contributions are not easily accessed. For example it may take up to one year to access a significant grant due to the intense competition for grants.

Over recent years i have implemented many projects in the coastal promontory ward which are in line with community expectations & aspirations such as;

### **Venus Bay**

- The extension to the bike walking track into Venus Bay, a great project for the protection of all walkers and bicycle riders and to further promote the brilliant Tour De Tarwin.
- A new bird hide adjacent to the Venus Bay jetty including a local community plant out.
- More planting along the existing bike walking track.
- New track seating the length of the track.
- An all-weather sun/rain shelter at the main track car park to be completed by mid-November.
- Resurfacing of unsealed roads has been subject to availability, the sandy colour which is currently not available.
- Working hard on an additional walking/cycling project of some 3.7km.

We are close to realising a shuttle bus for household residents to take some pressure of the parks victoria beach car parks. We are aiming to ferry 10-15% of households over summer.

An optional household rubbish pick up will be available in 2013. This service will be provided at your choice. This will facilitate those that require such a service but also those that do not wish such a service or expense. This ensures the protection of our transfer station hours and the employment it creates.

### **Tarwin Lower**

- A new canoe/boat ramp.
- New footpath with parking re-surfacing from the pub through to the petrol station.
- A new walking track "Manna gum loop track (1km) within the flora & fauna park, entrance off fauna park road.

### **Walkerville**

- A new CFA satellite station, a long term goal that was accomplished working with and for a very dedicated community.

### **Waratah Bay**

- New drainage to protect properties around & including Cooina Crt.
- Budgeted new toilet's in the caravan park.
- Promotion of the proposed 'wasp' walking trail, from Waratah Bay through to Sandy Point.

### **Sandy Point**

- New community centre, a massive achievement by this small community.

### **Fish Creek**

- Budgeted reconstruction of toilets/ preschool upgrade including kitchen & office.

### **Foster**

- Footpath along Toora Road.
- Guard rails on Fuller Road
- Working with the Foster Stock yard Gallery committee on a business plan to expand the library & gallery.

### **Toora**

- Budgeted resealing of Stanely St and the Stanely St footpath
- Old milk factory receives huge investment that will create a substantial number of jobs.

### **Port Franklin**

- Supporting the Alf Wilder Junior Fishing Competition, a wonderful event for the youth of the coastal area.

### **Port Welshpool / Welshpool**

- Budgeted boat ramp car parking.
- Long jetty project is a challenging program I very much look forward to being a part of.

### **Mount Best**

- Welcome to the coastal promontory ward.

At the direction of our communities I initiated and completed a criteria enabling all our townships to establish community vegetable gardens.

The coastal community has lobbied for the corner inlet tourism development project, in which council committed funds towards securing grants. Examples include the state government providing substantial financial support for the great southern rail trail extension (Foster to Welshpool)

Furthermore the rezoning of land assisted the Wilsons Promontory gateway tourist facility at Yanakie to develop to the next stage. This project will secure millions of tourism dollars throughout our coastal ward.

Part of council's commitment to tourism includes restoration of the Port Welshpool long jetty, dredging of the Toora channel for boating and family water activities.

This included a feasibility study and detailed design for a Port Welshpool marina development to suit the local area. If the local community approves the proposed development. then I will support them.

Finally I plan on establishing weekend community meetings, to include community representation on council committees. This will ensure your direct input to all future projects in the coastal promontory ward.

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