



FROM THE COAST

Being Shire President

I have to laugh when I read on social media that the Shire President sits on her bottom and is living in some parallel dimension. Being Shire President is an absolute whirlwind. It's hard to believe it was only 17 weeks ago I was given the responsibility of the position and all that it entails. Having served on Council for the past 4 years I knew more or less what I was in for, but many have asked the question "What does the Shire President actually do?"

It is not a paid full time position, although the hours certainly can be considered full time, and allowances are provided to compensate for at least some of that time. Shire Presidents often have full time jobs. I also have commitments to family and running a farm in Condingup in addition to serving the Esperance Community.

This week I was pleased to launch E-watch on behalf of the Shire with the Esperance Police, with an aim to increasing community safety, and attended a Horizon Power board networking event. This week was Council's Agenda Briefing Session which are held in preparation for the Ordinary Council Meeting, and along with the time spent reading and researching agenda items, make Tuesdays more than a full time day of work.

This week I officially opened the WA Super Sedans State Title 2016 and attended a dinner and talk with BlazeAid volunteers in Grass Patch, who have been working hard to restore fences destroyed by the bushfires in November. I met with Twin Town and Roadwise Committee members as well as the Local Bushfire Recovery Committee. Communicating with the media is a regular part of the job and this week I'll be talking about the Tanker Jetty Replacement Survey which has just been released and encouraging the whole Esperance community to complete.

In addition to ongoing duties like lobbying politicians, conducting Citizenship ceremonies and meetings, these commitments have to be balanced with household duties, shopping, cooking, washing and general running of the farm. As Councillors we make a commitment to be as available as possible to the community. We are here to represent you, and the wants and needs of ratepayers and the broader community. We answer emails addressing community concerns, take phone calls and follow up on other requests for information and help.

Being Shire President means being accessible 7 days a week, even when out socially, at the supermarket, in social clubs, on holidays or on the street. It means representing the Esperance community at all times. Representing and working for the Esperance community is something I am passionate about, and even when faced with harsh criticism, is a job I love to do.