

MEDIA RELEASE

MORGAN INSTITUTE OPEN FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES

New opportunities to increase the use of the historic Morgan Institute are expected to open up following changes to the building's management plan that will allow for leases and licences to be granted.

The Mid Murray Council has updated the *Community Land Management Plan* for the Morgan Institute, for the first time since 2007. It now includes the provision for the facility to be used under a lease or licence arrangement.

The change will increase the flexibility of use for the Institute, opening the building up to more options for use by the community, associations or local clubs by long-term or one-off agreements.

The decision was made following public consultation, with two submissions in support of the proposal. A petition with 109 signatures was also presented to Council requesting that the Institute continue to remain under Council's care and control.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the Institute would remain an important part of Morgan's heritage and future.

"The Morgan Institute is a significant part of the local community – both for its historic value and its current role as a local meeting place," Mayor Burgess says.

"The building itself dates back to 1910 and includes additions that were built as a war memorial in honor of the town's servicemen following World War 1. Council recognises the value of the Institute and amending the Community Land Management Plan will allow us to increase its use options by providing for one-off or longer-term use arrangements.

"Importantly, we want to assure the Morgan community that the building will remain a Council asset and that any proposal to lease any part of the Institute will come back to the community for their feedback before any decisions are made on its future use.

"Our aim in updating the management plan – as we have done successfully with a number of our other local halls and facilities – is to open up additional opportunities for use of the building, which will add to its vibrancy and increased use."

The Morgan Institute is currently used by the Morgan Lions Club. However, the club only requires the use of one room. The new provisions under the updated Community Land Management Plan will allow Council to maximise use of the building.

Similar provisions have also been added to management plans for other community institutes and halls, such as those in Mannum, Walker Flat, Rockleigh and Tungkillo.

Under the concept, any proposed new lease or licence would be released for community consultation and public feedback would be presented to Council prior to its decision-making.

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