# Belconnen Community Council – Chair’s Report AGM 2020

2019 brought some unanticipated difficulties to our district with the early start to the bushfire season bringing unseasonal smoke to the district. Whilst it was short lived, the horror of the worst season on the eastern seaboard in living memory was not far away. But as good Australians, we supported our ravaged communities with charity aid, money and goodwill; all in an attempt to help in whatever way we could. We endured the smoke haze that quickly saw us become the worst city in the world for air quality; we endured the heat and the limitations the fires brought with them and watched as our southern borders were threatened by flames.

Your BCC Committee volunteered some time to sort goods and pack hampers at the Belconnen Community Service (now CRCS) HQ in the first week of January to help in the effort for those who were doing it tough. It was a wonderful sight to watch everyone come together to do good for those affected by the fires.

In between we were perfecting our new branding and looking to incorporate some local landmarks that represent our district and are readily recognisable as Belconnen. The “Belco Owl” was a no-brainer as a centre piece but the great touch was the “Running Lights” artwork as the foreground to seal the new logo. This was a fantastic project to bring us into the new decade and we thank Emma Nilsen for her wonderful vision in bringing the artwork to life.

COVID has been the enduring legacy of 2020. It has presented us with a myriad of challenges, most of which have reduced our ability to share our humanity and sense of community. What we have endured over the last few months is a credit to everything the ACT and Belconnen communities have experienced through floods, fires and storms. What we have demonstrated is that we can work together to achieve the best outcomes, keep each other safe and support each other when times get hard.

As a council, the Committee has tried to keep continuity in what we have been able to provide across the last six months and that has had its own challenges. Trying to work out the best platform to be able to communicate has been a trial, but eventually we got there! It was a trial waiting to hear from the ACT Government on new processes and the limitations brought by the COVID restrictions; with the limitations came the confusion but fortunately the communications were clear enough for us to digest properly. What has resulted is a new way to meet and share information that as a Committee, we will work hard to maintain until we can meet again in person.

Over the coming months we will focus on what ever advice the government gives us going forward, but we have a number of outstanding community infrastructure issues going on: from the redevelopment at Kippax, to the ongoing saga at Giralang shops and the myriad of other issues across the district.

I want to thank my committee members individually for their hard work supporting me in this role: Clayton Brown as your Deputy Chair has been a steady rock to backfill for me and his IT skills are second to none; Maree Pavloudis as our Treasurer has been wonderful in very challenging times; Charles Thomas has been fantastic fulfilling his role as our longest serving committee member and Public Officer; Bor Peeters continues to shine for his community and never fails to keep my mind focussed on the suburb by suburb view of our district. Special thanks to Bronwyn Vincent in her time with us as Secretary; you are irreplaceable!

And a plea to all of our members to think about stepping up and becoming a committee member. We are in need of new faces to help take us into 2021 so if you have just a couple of hours to spare we would be grateful for your help!

Glen Hyde

**Chair**

**Belconnen Community Council**

**10 September 2020**