

# A welcomed change

THE results of Mitchell Shire Council's 2024-28 election has been pleasing news for not-for-profit community group Protect Our Farms (POF).

## Shaping the shire's future

RESIDENTS can now share their thoughts on the future of the Mitchell Shire.

Organised by Mitchell Shire Council, the new 10-question survey titled *Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029* is seeking residents' insight into the issues that matter to them most.

Open now until December 1, the survey can be completed both online or in person at the Kilmore Gaol Café Market on November 24, or Greater Beveridge Community Centre on November 25.

Mitchell Shire Council Chief Executive Brett Luxford invited residents and business owners to participate in shaping the future of the shire.

"This is a vital opportunity for the people of Mitchell Shire to voice their ideas, concerns, and visions for the future," he said.

"We are committed to transparency and inclusivity in all aspects of governance, and your input is crucial as we plan for a resilient and thriving community.

"Each voice in our community is important, and every feedback counts.

"These plans will guide our actions for the next four years and beyond, shaping the quality of life and the services we provide.

"We urge everyone to take part and help us tailor our strategies to better meet the needs of all residents."

Those who complete the survey will go into the running to win a hamper of local products valued at \$300. For more information, visit [www.engagingmitchellshire.com](http://www.engagingmitchellshire.com).

To complete the survey online, visit [www.engagingmitchellshire.com/council-and-health-plan-2025-2029](http://www.engagingmitchellshire.com/council-and-health-plan-2025-2029).

Welcoming fresh faces to the council, POF Secretary Rae Clark expressed delight that the group's values were shared among many of the electorate's new representatives.

"It is encouraging that four of the newly elected councillors received the highest ratings in POF's voting guide," she said.

"The new council brings substantial change, with a majority of fresh faces ... demonstrating a strong call from residents for change."

Local farmer Lyndon Arnel said the new council offered a timely opportunity to reassess the Landscape Assessment Study (LAS) and its recommendation to introduce Significant Landscape Overlays (SLOs) in the area.

"[There is a] need for a thorough review of both the LAS and the SLO proposal itself," he said.

"POF is optimistic that the new council will take this opportunity to carefully reconsider the proposed SLOs, address the identified issues, and prioritise the perspectives of those most affected.

"[We look] forward to collaborating with the new council to promote policies that support sustainable agriculture and respect the rights and livelihoods of the farming community."

However, while Mitchell Shire Chief Executive Brett Luxford looked forward to continuing to work with the community on the LAS and proposed SLOs, he noted that the previous council's resolution could not be rescinded.

"We will continue to consult with the community, particularly those directly affected by the LAS recommendations," he said.

"It's important to note that, under Council's Governance Rules, the resolution to progress to the next stage of the LAS and prepare statutory documentation cannot be rescinded by the incoming council.

"However, the new council will decide what happens after the statutory documentation is prepared for the Planning Scheme Amendment process and presented to them."