

Group backs farm-friendly councillors

The Protect Our Farms lobby group has welcomed the newly elected councillors of Mitchell Shire.

Protect Our Farms secretary Rae Clark said it was encouraging that four of the newly elected councillors received the highest ratings in the group's voting guide, reflecting a shared commitment to elective governance and the wellbeing of agricultural communities.

"The new council brings substantial change, with a majority of fresh faces and only two returning members, demonstrating a strong call from residents for change," Ms Clark said.

"Coupled with the recent resignation of Mitchell Shire CEO Brett Luxford, this presents a unique opportunity for Mitchell Shire Council to reassess its priorities and approaches."

Landowner, farmer and ratepayer Lyndon Arnel said the change in council offered a timely opportunity

to reassess the Landscape Assessment Study and its recommendations to introduce Significant Landscape Overlays.

"The LAS was endorsed by the previous council but only narrowly, passed by a single vote and accompanied by numerous conditions," Ms Arnel said.

"These conditions include further consultation, benchmarking and significant revisions, highlighting substantial flaws in the original study and consultation process."

"These factors underscore the need for a thorough review of both the LAS and the SLO proposal itself."

"Protect Our Farms 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."

"Protect Our Farms urges the new council to engage transparently and

constructively with farmers and other stakeholders.

"Ensuring that the voices of community members are central to any policy decisions impacting agricultural land is essential for fostering trust and achieving balanced outcomes."

"Protect Our Farms looks forward to collaborating with the new council to promote policies that support sustainable agriculture and respect the rights and livelihoods of the farming community."

Protect Our Farms created a voting guide for the 2024 Mitchell Shire Council elections to encourage residents to support candidates committed to strong governance and the needs of the rural community.

"The campaign was a great vehicle to educate the community about the significance of farming in Mitchell Shire," Ms Clark said.

"We believe ratepayers are much better informed about our issues."



St Mary's, Seymour, students created a 'curly tree' out of used plastic bottles as their entry in the 'Circular Champions' award.

St Mary's students are Circular Champions

Continued from page 1

"This inclusive initiative allowed everyone to contribute, creating a vibrant, shared masterpiece that reflects our commitment to sustainability and teamwork."

The talented winners received a bumper prize pack of Pilot Pen classroom stationery, including erasable gel pens and highlighters, whiteboard markers, ballpoints, refills and Sellotape safety dispensers.

Pilot Pen Australia head of marketing Jarrad Murray said the company was thrilled to see the excitement, imagination and enthusiasm the students brought to the Circular

Champions challenge.

"We have been a proud partner of the Aussie of the Month program for 20 years this year, and we are keen to encourage people to refill their pens when the ink finishes as part of our commitment to a circular economy," Jarrad said.

The Aussie of the Month program recognises outstanding contributions to the primary school community and broader society, and rewards students who display values such as respect, inclusion, mateship and a fair go.

National Australia Day Council chief executive Mark Fraser said the Aussie of the

Month program was delivered by Auspire - Australia Day Council (WA) in partnership with the Department of Home Affairs and the National Australia Day Council and its network.

"We are delighted to support this exciting initiative as part of the popular Aussie of the Month program and extend our appreciation to Pilot Pen Australia for providing these generous prizes," Mark said.

● To sign up and receive a 2025 award kit containing Aussie of the Month certificates, lapel pins and Pilot Pen stationery products, schools can register via aussieofthemonth.org.au



Protect our Farms is keen to work with the newly elected Mitchell Shire councillors.