



ROSES REPLACED

Dave Furlong and Tina Tkalcovic were among those hard at work replacing the roses at the Collie Police Station with a waterwise garden full of native plants last week. The original roses have been relocated. *Story page 14.*

Crisis meeting

Future of footy in Collie on the table

SOME harsh home truths were aired at a meeting aiming to plot the future of the Collie Eagles Football Club last Friday night.

Members, supporters, and past and present players packed the clubrooms for an open discussion on how to strengthen the club.

It has been a difficult season for the Eagles, with the league, reserves, colts and women's teams all languishing at or near the bottom of their competitions' ladders.

President Matt Blackford called the meeting, and acknowledged that the club's on-field performances this year have not been up to scratch.

However, he rejected rumours it is considering moving to the Lower South West Football League, stressing this would not happen under his watch.

Player shortages have been an ongoing issue, and Mr Blackford highlighted the recent forfeit of reserves games as a key concern.

"It's a bit of a failure on our behalf," he said.

"It's a struggle each week to field a ressie side."

He said the related issue of players leaving is also being addressed, with 11 former men and women players currently representing other clubs.

Mr Blackford said the club has taken some initial steps to reach out to former players to determine what can be done to lure them back.

Part of the issue is players chasing pay packets, however the need to make the Eagles a more inviting and inclusive destination was raised by a number of attendees.

Former club president Jamie Pitchers pointed to the financial strain being felt by many at present as another issue impacting player numbers.

"Some people just can't afford to play footy," he said. "It's not cheap coming to play, and all that stuff adds up."

"People in this community cannot afford it with the cost of living at the moment, and they're probably too proud to tell you why."

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Muja unit closure delay

FRESH doubts have been cast over the transition timeline from coal-fired power after the delayed closure of one of the Muja Power Station units. *Page 3.*

STREET FAIR Market stalls and live entertainment
10am-3pm, Sunday, 10 September

VISUAL ARTS Exhibitions @ Collie Art Gallery & Mine Workers Institute, 10-4pm

PERFORMING ARTS Bystander - Collie, by Whiskey & Boots
8th & 9th September

WORKSHOPS Creative workshops on now
Book Club Breakfast, writers' workshops

STUDIO TRAIL 12 open studios in Collie and surrounds
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