



“From the GM’s Desk”

5th May 2016



The rain over the weekend was extremely welcome and has provided enough moisture to allow the grading of the road network to be undertaken more effectively. Council has five (5) graders and two (2) rollers working on the Wanaaring Road which had been the source of a number of complaints but the dry weather had meant that grading was not achieving any long term benefit. The graders will be working on the road for the rest of this week and into next week and this should be pleasing to the residents who use this road.

Councillor Leigh Byron, Mayor of Balranald Shire and the recently elected President of the Western Division Shires will visit Bourke on the 23rd May and meet with the Council as part of the Ordinary Meeting of Council. Councillor Byron is keen to meet with all Councils to familiarise himself with the respective member Councils of Western Division and get a feel for the issues impacting on each of the Councils which will in turn assist him to undertake his role as President. Councillor Byron has already visited Cobar and Broken Hill Councils and will this week also meet with Walgett and Brewarrina Shire during their Council meetings.

The May Council meeting will see Council consider the adoption of the Draft Operational Plan for 2016/2017. Part of the adoption process is the consideration of any submissions that have been received by Council in respect of the Draft Operational Plan. The closing date for submissions was the 2nd May 2016. All submissions received must be considered by Council prior to the adoption of the Draft operational Plan.

Annette and I enjoyed the wedding ceremony of eldest daughter Jaimie to David Slyney and the venue in the Hunter Valley Gardens was fantastic. Jaimie looked beautiful and it was an extremely proud moment for me to be able to walk her down the aisle. It was also good to be able to catch up with our two (2) sons, Cameron and Brenton and their respective partners Kristina and Stephanie whom we don't get the opportunity to visit all that often.

A reminder to all residents whose property have a pool and are thinking of selling or leasing their property that new regulations now apply to the sale and lease of properties with swimming pools. Properties with a swimming pool or spa pool sold or leased on or after the 29th April 2016 now need a valid certificate of compliance or relevant occupation certificate. Where the certificate of compliance cannot be obtained, the vendor will be able to transfer the responsibility to obtain the certificate of compliance to the buyer. The transfer will be realised through an attachment of a non-compliance certificate to the sale contract. The buyer will then have 90 days from the days of settlement to rectify defects listed in the non-compliance certificate. For further information, go to <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/my-home/swimming-pools/selling-property-pool-or-spa>

The forum regarding rural trespass hosted by former New South Wales Assistant Police Commissioner, Steve Bradshaw and Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries MP held on the 20th April 2016 was well attended and had some positive outcomes.

The problem of trespass has led to significant problems including stock theft, property damage and cutting of fencing to mention but a few. The meeting was to assist Steve Bradshaw in the compilation of a report on the issue to be considered by the Government. The high price of goats at the moment has led to a spike in the problem and with the distances involved and size of the properties makes the policing of the issue extremely difficult.

Recommendations from the meetings will feed directly into the Rural Crime Advisory Group and Minister for Justice for any legislative changes that are needed.

The quarterly meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee was held at the Rural Fire Service Offices on Tuesday and a number of issues were raised including the response to the recent airport emergency as a result the failure of the landing gear of an inbound plane to go into place. Whilst in this instance the plane landed safely the preparedness of our services to handle worse case scenarios is important and as part of the meeting a “debrief” was held into possible improvements to the current documented procedures.

The closing date for submissions in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Small Stock Abattoir for Bourke was last Tuesday, 26th April 2016 and any submissions received will now be considered by the Department of Planning as part of the approval process.

Council last week lodged its two (2) applications for funding under the Regional Water and Waste Water Backlog Program. The applications were lodged with Infrastructure NSW and were for the construction of a New Water Treatment Plant to service both Bourke and North Bourke and the construction of a new Oxidation pond at the Sewerage Treatment Plant.

The opportunity for funding is welcomed and will provide the opportunity to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place to service the town over the next few decades

Should Council be successful in the applications work will commence as soon as practical.

Council has undertaken a considerable amount of work on the sewage infrastructure with both the Mertin and Warraweena Street pump stations being refurbished recently.

It's been a decade since NSW mandatory smoke alarm legislation was passed in NSW, which means millions of smoke alarms across NSW are now reaching their 'best before' date and are due to be replaced.

Fire and Rescue NSW recommends that every house in NSW be fitted with the latest photoelectric smoke alarm.

As part of Fire and Rescue NSW's "Re-Alarm Your Home against Fire" awareness campaign, throughout the month of May NSW Fire and Rescue is asking all NSW residents to replace their smoke alarms, and take the time to check in on 10 friends or family members to ensure they update their smoke alarms too.

For more information, go to <http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/realarm/>

Local Government NSW will be assisting in the promotion of this important initiative which is already credited in saving many lives.

Council staff have a number of projects in progress at the moments including, the commissioning of the Walkden's Bore Project, the Bridge Construction programme, the upgrade of the Bourke Airport, the construction of the Splash Park at the Swimming Pool Complex plus the additional roadworks able to be undertaken due to the additional Roads to Recovery Funding.

It was pleasing that Enngonia were once again able to host a dusk service on ANZAC Day after the inaugural service in the village in 2015. Services were also held in Louth and Wanaaring to mark ANZAC Day.

Annette and I attended the Dawn Service in Hamilton in Newcastle and despite it being a suburban service there was a huge attendance with my estimate being 2000 people coming from all sections of the community.

The dawn service is certainly very moving occasion and when the stories are told of the acts bravery that occurred and sacrifices made in the various conflicts it certainly highlights the significance of this special day in Australia's history and a renewed respect and admiration for those who unselfishly served our great country and fought for the way of life and freedoms that we often too readily take for granted.

While there was good rain over the weekend it was certainly not drought breaking. The falls across the catchment at Byrock weren't enough for any significant inflow to the water storage and water is still being carted to the Byrock village. The residents of Byrock have been very conscious of the reduced supply of water and have to date been frugal with the level of consumption with the amount being carted able to meet the demand. Water is carted on a Monday Wednesday and Saturday and will continue until we get some substantive inflows to the storage.

Quote of the week!

A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination

Nelson Mandela

Ross Earl
General Manager