



## “From the GM’s Desk” 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015



The news that the State Government will be calling for expressions of interest from operators wishing to undertake the provision of a Regular Passenger Transport (RPT) air service for Bourke is welcome news indeed.

The decision has come after an extensive process to determine the feasibility of such a service and has involved a considerable amount of work by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and our Local Member and Minister for Western New South Wales Hon Kevin Humphries MP.

The proposal involves a triangulation service that would link Bourke, Walgett and Dubbo with the flights in turn linking with the flights in and out of Dubbo to Sydney.

Already I have noticed a number of positive comments regarding the re-establishment of the air service and I am confident that once established we should see a good level of patronage. The regular passenger service to Bourke was last provided in 2008.

Bourke has an excellent airport with the terminal building being equal to any facility for a town of this size in New South Wales. Additionally we have a very good refuelling facility which is important for both the regular service plus the normal charter and tourist related flights into Bourke.

Since the feasibility study was commenced I have fielded a number of enquires in relation to the service, including potential operators.

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The fee free tip days have been scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March and on these days all DOMESTIC waste is able to be deposited free of charge at the tip. There are some exceptions and fees will still apply to such things as tyres, asbestos, chemicals, liquid waste, building waste and commercial waste.

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The Council meeting for February will be held this MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at the Council Chambers 29 Mitchell Street Bourke starting at 9.00am. A public forum will be held at 10.00 am as usual.

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Council has entered in to an agreement with both Bourke Community Corrections and Juvenile Justice to provide opportunities for those who have been given work orders by the courts.

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Next week promises to be an extremely busy one with the Council meeting on Monday, On Wednesday there is the seminar conducted by the Department of Local Government in relation to the Rural Council template and guidelines which were released last week as part of the Fit for the Future Process.

There is a Strategic Planning Forum for the Lower Macquarie Water Utility Alliance being held on Thursday followed by the Board Meeting of the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils to be held on the Friday. On the Sunday, the Mayor Councillor Andrew Lewis, Deputy Mayor Barry Hollman, Councillor Cecil Dorrington and I travel to Condobolin for the Annual Conference of the Western Division Councils.

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There is still no date forthcoming from the Western District Health regarding the Community Consultation Meetings in relation to the various models being considered in relation to the provision of birthing services for Bourke. This is despite an indication that these meetings would be scheduled for January 2015.

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The flow in the Darling that originated from the Culgoa is now being supplemented by the flow from the Barwon which is a result of the rainfall in the upper catchment.

There is no definitive period that the water is expected to flow over the Bourke Weir but it is anticipated that it should last at least until the end of the moth if not longer.

There has been a restriction placed on the pumping of water from the Barwon –Darling River system with the hope that the flows currently within the system will continue and that it may eventually reach Menindee Lakes to provide some security of Water to Broken Hill which only has a guaranteed water availability until late this year. Let's hope we have some significant flows in the system shortly that will enable the irrigators to have access to water for their crops plus see water reach the diminishing Menindee Lakes.

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Those residents who have visited the cemetery over the past few months would have noticed the new pylons at the entrance of the cemetery which were in fact part of the old Bourke Railway Station before it was demolished some years ago. Cr Jack Bennett with the assistance of local steel fabricator, Doug Berthold arranged for the restoration of these pylons and they were erected by Council staff. Now thanks to the generosity of the Bennett family there has been a sculptural dove erected on each of the pylons. These doves were made in New Zealand and transported to Australia.

With doves being the symbols of Peace and Love they are a very appropriate choice and they look very good.

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The amount of litter that is being dropped around town can be reduced significantly if everyone takes the time to walk a few steps to the nearest bins. This is particularly the case with the skate park precinct where there seems to be a reluctance to walk those extra few steps to the bins provided. The dropping of litter creates additional work for Council staff and also detracts from the appearance of the facility generally.

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A work team being coordinated by Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Centre (MPREC) will be assisting with the preparation of the Renshaw Oval (Showground/Race Course) and Exhibition Centre facilities in preparation for the Back to Bourke weekend, the Race Meeting and the Bourke Show which will follow a few weeks later. From a Council perspective the support from MPREC is appreciated and we look forward to building upon the relationship and the involvement of these work teams in other areas. With the large areas that Council has to maintain the injection of the additional assistance will make the task a little easier.

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Council staff are preparing the 2015/2016 Operational Plan (budget) and members of the community are invited to make submissions to Council in relation to additions or deletions to the budget or proposed alterations to the level of service currently provided.

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Council is awaiting delivery of a new street sweeper which should be here within two weeks. The replacement of the street sweeper is part of Councils plant replacement program and will ensure that Council has a modern, well maintained and reliable plant fleet to undertake the services required throughout the shire.

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The water supplies throughout the shire have been able to meet the needs of the various communities throughout the summer period without the need to impose restrictions which is due to both the responsible water usage by residents and the cooler than expected weather

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Remember the "Welcome to Bourke Evening" scheduled for the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at the Bourke Swimming Pool.

All newcomers to Bourke and representatives of community, social and sporting organisations are encouraged to come along. RSPVs are requested by 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015 so that catering arrangements can be finalised.

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A reminder regarding the Village Tour and Community Consultation Meetings planned for March 2015.

Louth is scheduled for the morning of Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015

Wanaaring is scheduled for the afternoon of Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015

Byrock is scheduled for lunchtime Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Bourke is scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Fords Bridge is scheduled for the morning of Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Enngonia is scheduled for Lunchtime on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Details relating to the times and meeting arrangements for the individual meeting will be circulated locally.

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I noted with interest that the State Government has indicated that should their proposal for the leasing of the electricity "Poles and Wires" infrastructure go ahead there will be some significant amounts of funding available to rural New South Wales in relation to infrastructure upgrades including water security. Council will monitor the proposal with interest to ensure that it is well placed to be able to take advantage of any funding that may become available. Equally Council is keen to ensure that any proposal to lease the poles and wires will not lead to a reduction of service and employment in this area.

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The next rates instalment is due by the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and if any one has any queries in respect of their rate notices they should contact Councils rates officer during normal working hours.

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Remember should anyone wish to book a Council oval or park for a function you should ensure that the booking is made through Council's Engineering Department so that the ground can be prepared in accordance with the requirements, appropriate facilities made available and fees determined.

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I mentioned last week about the display being coordinated by the Library staff to commemorate the Centenary of ANZAC DAY. Staff would be appreciative of copies of such things as photo newspaper clipping etc. that people may have in their possession.

Ross Earl  
General Manager