



“From the GM’s Desk” 12th March 2015



Thank you once again to all that were involved in the various Town and Village Community Consultation Meetings last week. The meetings are always a good chance for Councillors and staff to meet with community members on a relatively informal basis. The ideas presented and issues raised will form part of the budget planning process for the next year and future years.

Whilst the attendance at the Bourke meeting was very small there were a number of constructive comments received and as with all comments received during the week Council will do its best to investigate each and provided feedback as appropriate.

During the meeting the Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis, Deputy Mayor, Cr Barry Hollman and I took the opportunity to thank the members of the community who help Council in a number of ways throughout the year, thus enabling residents to enjoy a much greater range of services and facilities.

The work done by the various community members is very much appreciated by Council.

As in previous years the 2015/2016 Budget is extremely tight with the increase in costs in many instances outstripping the level of allowable rate increase and other sources of income.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the level of service that is currently provided will be maintained and the management team are constantly looking at methods of improving productivity and reduce costs.

The new valuations will mean some adjustment to the rating depending on the level of increases in the various areas across the Shire.

Council has taken delivery of the new Street Sweeper and that was put into action this week. The Street Sweeper has played a very important role in ensuring that the presentation of Bourke is to a high standard with the gutters free from rubbish, leaves, etc. Council will be looking to dispose of the existing Street Sweeper by the most advantageous method and have looked at the sale by auction or perhaps sale to another Council.

The first of the “Fee Free Tip Days” will be held this Saturday the 14th March 2015 to assist residents who are taking the opportunity to clean up their yards prior to the Back to Bourke weekend. Whilst there is generally no fees applicable on the day there are some minor exceptions with a charge still applying to tyres, asbestos, chemicals, liquid waste, building and commercial waste.

Seniors Week Activities for 15th – 22nd March 2015

Day/Date	Activity	Location	Host
Sunday - 15 th March	BBQ Lunch	Back O’ Bourke Café	Lions Club and CWA
Monday -, 16 th March	Day Care	Seniors Citizen Hall	Community Health & Bourke Shire Council
Tuesday -, 17 th March	Young at Heart Short Films Awards	Diggers on the Darling	Young at Heart Film Festival & Bourke Shire Council
Wednesday - 18 th March	Seniors Fun Day	High School MPC	Provided by Bourke Garden Club
Thursday - 19 th March	Lunch	Bourke Bowling Club	Bourke Bowling Club
Friday - 20 th March	Mystery Tour	Limited seats (20)	Bourke Shire Council & Bourke Bowling Club
Saturday - 21 st March	Rest Day		
Sunday - 22 nd March	BBQ Lunch	Back O’ Bourke Café	Bourke Rotary Club and Far West Red Cross

Bourke Home Care Service will be providing their bus to do pickups on the both Sundays to pick up seniors for the BBQ’s.

Bourke Bowling Club will be providing their bus to do pickups for the Luncheon at Bowling Club and have kindly donated their bus and driver for the Mystery tour on the Friday.

For any more information or to RSVP to these events please contact Letiticia Tiffen, Council’s Community & Governance Officer 68308 000 or call into the front office 29 Mitchell Street, Bourke.

I am sure it is not too late to participate in some of the activities and events and if you haven’t yet booked in or want further information you can call the Council offices on 68308000.

However, those bookings should be made by lunchtime tomorrow so catering can be finalised.

Planning is well advanced for the Back to Bourke Reunion Weekend with the main organising committee and the various smaller committees all pitching in to lend a hand. Congratulations should go to all those that have been helping out to bring the Renshaw Complex to a high standard after a couple of years of little activity and dry conditions. I understand that there were about 20 at the last working bee, picking rocks from the race

track. Thank you also to the Murdi Paaki work crew who are helping out the committee and Shire staff in preparing the grounds.

Both Saturday and Sunday of Easter are set to be big days for Bourke with the start of the busy tourist season also almost here. The Bourke Rotary Club is heavily involved and encouraging the whole community to get involved with the parade and wool bale rolling. I understand that some of the Champion Wool Bale Rollers from a decade ago are in solid training and out to prove that they still have what it takes.

Work continues on the Mertin Street Pump Station and as mentioned previously this is a six month job.

The March Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, 23rd March at 9.00am in the Council Chambers Mitchell Street Bourke and at this Meeting Council will consider the Operational Plan (Budget) for 2015/2016.

The Council will have the opportunity to review the documents prepared by staff and make any amendments required prior to authorising the public exhibition Draft Operational Plan. The draft document will be on public exhibition until the 4th May 2015 and during that time all members of the public are able to make a submission in respect of the documents. Prior to adopting the Draft Operational Plan Council is required to take into consideration any submissions received.

Meetings of the Town and Village Committee and Corporate Planning Committee will be held on Monday, 16th of March.

Local Member, the Kevin Humphries, MP was in town last week to discuss the new allocation of funding for the Pipe and Cap Program for bores in the area.

On Friday he announced Additional Funding for the Security of Town Water Supplies in Regional and Rural New South Wales.

Bourke Shire Council will be looking to secure funding for the upgrade of the Bourke Water Treatment Plant and following suggestions received during the round of Community Consultation Meetings will also try and seek funding to upgrade the bores at some of the villages given both the age of the current bores and increased demand on those bores.

Don't forget that the NSW State Election is on Saturday, 28th March with Pre Poll voting available at the Bourke TAFE from Saturday, 21st March. On Election Day polling will be held at the Bourke Public School in Green Street and at the Enngonia Public School. Polls are open on Election Day from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

Further information can be attained from the Electoral Commission of NSW website www.elections.nsw.gov.au

One of the issues raised at Wanaaring during the Consultation Meeting was the fact that they no longer have polling facilities within the village.

The visitor season is once again on us and while there is still some very hot weather about there are also plenty of caravans and tourists already on the road.

The PV Jandra will commence its normal operations from this Monday with two (2) cruises per day, six (6) days per week. Cruises depart from Kidman's Camp at 9.00am and 3.00pm.

The Visitor Information Centre is now also open seven (7) days per week from 9.00am and along with the Back O' Bourke Café. The Visitor Information Centre is already proving once again to be popular with staff handling a large number of enquires.

I understand that work on the Crossley Engine to install two (2) new pistons is on track to be finalised next week and once this is complete the Crossley Engine will also be starting at noon on weekdays but will not operate on the weekend.

Don't forget to save the date of the Annual Bourke Show which this year will be held on Saturday, 2nd of May. The committee are hard at work with preparations and work that that is currently being undertaken at Renshaw Oval in preparation for the races will be also very beneficial to the conduct of the Bourke Show.

The Show Committee would no doubt appreciate assistance of volunteers both prior to the show and on Show Day itself. If you are able to spare a few hours you could contact the Show Secretary, Prue Ritchie on 0488228864, Prue has advised that if she does not answer that if you leave a message, she will return your call to answer any enquiries that you have.

Day light saving will finish on the morning of Sunday, 5th April 2015 with all clocks to be moved back one hour at 3.00am.

Ross Earl
General Manager