



“From the GM’s Desk” 28th May 2015



This week Councillors finalised the Delivery Program and Operation Plan (budget) for the next financial year 2015-2016. There are many competing needs within the total operating expenditure of slightly over \$20 million dollars and difficult decisions regarding priorities are often made. The budget provides for a General Fund balanced budget and a considerable amount of work was required to get it to that level. The budget reflects how Council will best work for the community, maintain its essential services, satisfy legislative demands and ensure financial sustainability.

Up to 27 NetWaste member Councils, from around NSW will come together in Bourke on Friday to discuss common waste issues under one of the organisation’s quarterly Forums. NetWaste is a voluntary regional waste organisation that coordinates the provision of waste services and community education for its member Councils. NetWaste member Councils cover a vast area of Regional NSW branching from Broken Hill to Lithgow. Council’s take it in turns hosting the Forums and the Bourke event will allow waste officers to see what advances have occurred in waste management over the last few years.

From the 6th July, licensed premises, restaurants and cafes need to comply with changes to the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 that apply to their business. The changes are that commercial outdoor dining areas must be smoke-free and areas within 4 metres of a pedestrian entrance to or exit from a licenced venue, restaurant or café must be smoke-free. Penalties for customers and business owners who do not comply with the new smoking bans will be enforced by NSW Health Inspectors following the introduction of these bans.

The fourth rate instalment is due on 29th May 2015 as are the charges for the usage of filtered water.

If you are experiencing difficulty in paying these accounts and wish to make arrangements for the payment of these accounts please contact Councils Rates and Water Billing Officer.

The Western Division Mid Term Meeting will be held in Cobar on 1 June 2015, the Mayor, Cr Andrew Lewis, Deputy Mayor, Cr Barry Hollman, Cr Cecil Dorrington and I will attend the meeting.

Member for Barwon, Kevin Humphries will be attending the meeting to provide a NSW Government update.

Council has been approached by Waverley Council to attend the Launch of “One Tree per Child” on Friday, 5th June 2015 at Bondi. Council supported participation in the “One Tree per Child” initiative which was developed by our 2015 Australia Day Ambassador, Jon Dee in association with Olivia Newton John.

The concept has gained international support with Jon Dee travelling to Bristol in the United Kingdom to launch the concept in that city, which will see every primary aged student, plant a tree.

Following the meeting with Western NSW Local Health District on Wednesday, 19th May 2015 Council has expressed their disappointment on the closure of the Bourke Maternity Service.

Council will continue to work with the senior staff of the Western NSW Local Health District to ensure there are no further loss of services and a report with milestones for improvements to the health service as discussed at the meeting should be developed and provided to the community.

Council will monitor the development of a midwifery model to support both antenatal and post-natal needs of the community

The old North Bourke Bridge is in need of some repair work and the ongoing maintenance of the bridge falls to Council following an agreement struck between Council and the Roads and Maritime Services.

Whilst the steel sections of the bridge are still in pretty good condition some of the timber sections are showing signs of deterioration and Council's Manager of Roads, Mark Gordon will be putting together a report on options for the repair of that section of the bridge and the estimated costs that will be involved.

Council has agreed to seek funding to carry out the necessary repair on the bridge to make it safe.

Council has written to the Hon. Niall Blair MLC the Minister for Primary Industries inviting him to visit Bourke so that he could meet with Council representatives first hand to discuss a range of issues within his portfolio affecting this part of the state. Issues include the ongoing drought conditions and the lack of water flow in the Darling River and availability of water for irrigation along with the current embargo on pumping from the Barwon Darling River System.

I understand the Bourke Clay Target Shooting Club held a very successful shoot on Friday and Saturday at the Bourke Renshaw complex. Approximately 50 competitors competed in the competition. Congratulations to the Committee.

I am sure you have noticed the tree lopping service currently working around town. Essential Energy has engaged the contactor to remove trees that are within one meter of the power lines. Work started on Monday and should be completed within two (2) weeks.

Manager of Works, Peter Brown travelled to a Regional Emergency Management meeting held in Cobar on Tuesday, items discussed were the water security of Menindee Lakes, town airports and reports from all Regional Emergency Officers.

Council continues to cart water to Byrock, although the area has received recent rain fall it has not been sufficient enough to fill the Byrock water tank, restrictions are in place for Byrock and all residents are reminded that the conservation of water is critical.

Regards

Leonie Brown
Acting General Manager