



## “From the GM’s Desk” 17th March 2016



The Mayor Councillor Andrew Lewis and I joined with delegates from the other eight (8) Councils proposed for membership of the Far West Initiative on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016 for a meeting of the Far West Initiative Advisory Committee (FWIAC) via teleconference to receive an update on the concept from the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Paul Toole, MP.

The Chairman of the Far West Initiative Advisory Committee (FWIAC) John Williams was in attendance as were representatives from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Local Government, Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the NGO Sector, together with the consultants from UTS who have been charged with the responsibility of preparing a discussion paper for the Far West Initiative.

The development of the Far West Initiative is gaining momentum and it is hoped that the discussion paper will be ready for release for public comment in the second half of 2016.

At the next meeting of the FWIAC to be held in Wentworth on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016 it is proposed that there will be a focus on the range of models being developed for the Far West Initiative and these being subject to discussion and comment by the members of the FWIAC.

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There has been a very enthusiastic response to the news that Council was successful in obtaining funding from the 2016 NSW Club Grants for the construction of a splash park at the Bourke War Memorial Swimming Complex.

The construction of the splash park is part of stage one of a master plan for the redevelopment of the complex and was identified as a priority during the consultation process held as part of the development of Council’s Community Strategic Plan.

Funding of \$720,562.00 was made available to Council from the NSW Club Grants.

While a works schedule is yet to be determined every effort will be made to have the work undertaken by the opening of next swimming season.

The splash park will provide a great introduction to water based activities for the younger members of our community in a safe and family friendly environment.

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A reminder that the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held this Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March at the Council Chambers, 29 Mitchell Street, commencing at 9.00am. The meeting has been brought forward due to the scheduled date being Easter Monday.

The April meeting has also been brought forward due to the scheduled date falling on ANZAC Day and will be now held on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

The Corporate Planning Committee of Council met on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 to undertake an initial review of the Draft Operational Plan for 2016/2017.

The Committee is charged with undertaking a preliminary review of the Draft Operational Plan prior to its presentation to Council for adoption.

The Corporate Planning Committee made some amendments to the draft document and it will now be presented to Council on Monday for their endorsement and authority to advertise.

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The Manager of Works, Peter Brown yesterday attended a briefing session for those Councils who have been shortlisted for funding under the restart NSW Water Security for Regions, Water and Waste Water Back Log programme.

Bourke Shire Council recently received notification that its applications for two (2) projects had been shortlisted. These projects being the construction of a new water treatment plant with a value of a little under nine million dollars and the construction of an additional oxidation pond at the Bourke Sewage Treatment Works which will cost in the vicinity of \$500,000.00.

The briefing session is to assist the shortlisted Councils in the preparation of their final submissions. Should funding be secured for both projects it will see both the water and sewer infrastructure for Bourke being in a very good position with the two (2) sewer pump stations having recently being completely refurbished and ongoing annual budget allocations made for the improvement of the other infrastructure.

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The advertising of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in relation to the proposed small stock abattoir complex for Bourke was a very significant milestone in the approval process.

The preparation of the EIS is an essential part of the development application process. The EIS is available on the Department of planning website

[http://www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view\\_job&job\\_id=7268](http://www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=7268)

A hard copy is also available for inspection at Councils Offices.

Submissions in relation to the EIS close on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

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Council services over the Easter weekend will essentially be as normal with no alteration to garbage collections.

Emergency calls can be directed to Council's Duty Officer on 0419 722055

The only significant change will be the closure of the Waste Management Facility in Bourke on Good Friday (25<sup>th</sup> March 2016) and on Easter Sunday (27<sup>th</sup> March 2016).

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The Jandra commenced operation again last Monday with the Crossley Engine also now in operation on a daily basis. Over the Easter break why not enjoy a cruise on the Jandra or visit the Back O' Bourke Centre.

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Council is still awaiting the outcome of the assessment of the tender process undertaken in respect of the provision of an air service to Bourke. Tenders closed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February and it is hoped that there will be some update available shortly.

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I have asked to be part of a small working party to look at the possibility of the Councils in the Far West Initiative to be able to access the "loan facility" being made available to Councils that have been deemed "Fit for the Future". Access to the funding would have considerable benefits by way of reduced borrowing costs and with Council looking to borrow around \$3,000,000.00 for the Water Treatment Plant replacement the savings could be significant. I am also assisting with the coordination of the purchase of video conferencing equipment for the eight (8) Far West Councils.

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Council has received an offer of funding to plant trees within the Shire as part of the "One Tree per Child Initiative". We are currently obtaining pricing for stock with funding being made available for the purchase of up to 5000 trees.

The concept of "One Tree per Child" involves each child attending the primary schools planting a tree. Obviously with the 5000 trees there is the potential to be able plant significantly more than that number and Council will be looking at possible locations with areas such as the Pre-School, Renshaw Oval, North Bourke Oval and cemeteries.

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While on trees it is good to see the way in which the trees that have been already planted on the entrance to Renshaw Oval have grown as well as those along Vision Way and Tancred Drive. The work done in tending these trees is all voluntary. Again, special thanks must go to Ian and Nan Langdon-Smith and their daughter Elizabeth who travel up from Sydney to undertake the work on Vision Way and Tancred Drive.

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On Monday Night the Mayor Andrew Lewis and Annette and I attended a function to mark the beginning of a bicycle ride by the C3 Cyclist 2016 Team riding 725km from Bourke to Canberra. They are hoping to raise funds in the amount of \$37,000 that will be allocated to the purchase of equipment for Bourke District Hospital \$4,500, Peak Hill Multi-Purpose Health Service \$4,500 and Queanbeyan District Hospital \$32,500.

Not only do these cyclists ride all the way but actually pay for the privilege with each of the riders expected to secure around \$2000 in sponsorship' donations. This coupled with the fact that take leave from their employment is indicated of their dedication and willingness to help others.

Thank you to the Baker and Beer families who hosted the function for the riders in Bourke.

The Bourke Gateway Concert Band performed for those in attendance and it is excellent to see the band being able to display their talents.

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Quote of the Week!

Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn - Benjamin Franklin

Ross Earl  
General Manager