



“From the GM’s Desk” 23rd June 2016



I met with a representative of TAFE Western in Dubbo last Thursday to discuss the future of TAFE Western in Bourke and in particular the current campus. I received an assurance that TAFE Western will continue to retain a strong presence in Bourke although the administrative arm of TAFE will in all probability be relocating to part of the Outback Division of General Practice building in Oxley Street and some of the courses will be delivered from these premises as well, in particularly those which involve remote delivery.

The current TAFE site will be retained for use by some of the mobile service delivery vehicles and other parts of the current site will become surplus to requirements and alternate uses will be sought. The old administration section will in all likelihood be demolished as it has apparently been condemned due to the cost of repairs.

At the meeting conducted by TAFE Western late in 2015 there was an indication of further consultation with the Bourke Community regarding the plans for TAFE in Bourke, and this second meeting I understand occurred on the 15th March 2016. Further additional consultation has taken place with some other groups within the community.

The future of a large section of the current TAFE complex is very much up in the air at this stage and Council will continue liaise with TAFE Western regarding their plans. The TAFE hall and the section of the building currently being utilised for administration facilities are included in those sections that are at this stage to be deemed surplus to current requirements.

A FREE Seminar on Drug and Alcohol Awareness is being held TONIGHT (23rd June 2016) with Bourke Shire Council partnering with the Lyndon Community from Dubbo to provide Drug and Alcohol awareness training for employers. The course is called Drug and Alcohol First Aid and will provide local employers and businesses with an increased awareness of the issues. Information regarding the seminars is available from Bourke Shire Council. The Seminars will be held at the Council Chambers starting at 6.00pm and will run for around one and a half hours.

Bourke Shire Council has been an important part of a successful pilot project in developing a model for waste management in discrete aboriginal communities. Council in association with other government agencies and Waste Aid have successfully implemented a new strategy that develops, implements, monitor's and evaluates new sustainable and viable waste management systems in these communities. The model is the first of its kind in NSW and it is hoped that it will be transferable to other Aboriginal communities both within NSW and nationally. Council has received great feedback from industry bodies about the program with future benefits for Bourke being foreseen. These initiatives coupled with the implementation of the container deposit scheme could have further flow on benefits in the future such as the potential for the re-establishment of a recycling service within the shire.

A mid-year meeting of Western Division Councils will be held in Cobar on Monday 11th July 2016 and no doubt the Local Government Reform Process including the recently released paper on Joint Organisation of Councils (JOs), the announced mergers and the progress in the establishment of the Far West Initiative (FWI) will figure prominently of the agenda. Emma Bradbury the Chief Executive Officer from the Murray Darling Association will also be in attendance to hear more about the concept of establishing a Fresh Water Research Centre in Bourke. With the exception of Carrathool, Lachlan and Moree Plains Shires all the other members of Western Division have been identified as being part of the FWI.

I will be travelling to Dubbo on Thursday afternoon to attend the quarterly meeting of the Orana Regional Organisation of Council's (OROC) General Manager's Advisory Committee (GMAC) on Friday morning. On the Thursday evening I will attend a farewell function for Paul Mann who is retiring from Gilgandra Shire Council after over twenty five (25) years as General Manager and Shire Clerk which is a remarkable achievement. Paul is highly regarded amongst his peers, in Local Government circles generally and has made a significant contribution to the broader Gilgandra community in a number of capacities and I would wish him well for a happy and healthy retirement.

The official naming of the Bridge over the Bogan River at Beemery as the Wayne O'Mally Bridge will take place on the 1st July 2016. The official naming ceremony will be undertaken by the Hon. Duncan Gay, MLC, Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight and will also be attended by the Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries. The opening is planned for around 1.00pm.

Copies of the petition on the need for improved mobile telephone services that is to be presented to Parliament after the July 2 elections will be collected this week so if you haven't signed it yet time is running out. Copies of the petition are available at the Shire Chambers, Public Library, and Post Office in Bourke and in the hotels in the village areas across the Shire.

Bourke Shire Council welcomed the recent announcement that a Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) will be introduced in New South Wales from July 2017 and will involve a 10 cent deposit being available to a range of cans and bottles. It has been something Council had been advocating for some time and should result in a reduction of bottles and cans and importantly a reduction in the amount of broken glass.

I have now read that Queensland is also considering the introduction of a similar scheme from 2018. Hopefully those states without such a scheme at present will give consideration to the introduction of a CDS in the near future.

The wet weather although very welcome generally played havoc with the 40th Bourke Pro- Am and although little golf was able to be played it was still a very successful weekend with twelve (12) professional golfers travelling up for the weekend and although not being able to display their talents still enjoyed the weekend. There was also a number ex- locals who returned to help celebrate this milestone event. Mayor, Councillor Andrew Lewis and I accepted an invitation to attend the Dinner on the Saturday night which was an enjoyable evening. Congratulations to all involved.

The next meeting of Council will be next Monday (27th June 2016) commencing at 9.00am.

A Public Forum will be held at 10.00 on the day and anyone with an issue that they would like to bring up to Councillors are invited to attend. Council encourages anyone who may be attending to present at the forum to contact the Executive Assistant, Kai Howard- Oakman on 0268308000 so that, if required, arrangements can be made for any computer presentation or additional information sought.

I noticed that mobile voting facilities for the Federal Election were available in both Wanaaring and Enngonia yesterday (22nd June) and will be available for the residents of Louth today (Thursday 23rd June) between 10.00am and 1.00pm.

Councillor Dino Zappacosta from Griffith City Council has written to Council in his capacity of Chair of the "Build More Dams Acton Group" which has been formed and is currently looking at a scheme to divert water from the Clarence River Region to the west of the Divide. The Scheme is re-examining a concept which was around in the early 1980s and involves capturing some of the water that currently flows into the Eastern Seaboard via the Clarence River and tunnelling it back through the Great Dividing Range and ultimately into the Darling River. A report will be table at the June Meeting of Council providing a copy of the report produced in 1984 by the Consulting Engineer, David Coffey.

For the Local Government Elections to be held in September 2016, polling places will be established in Louth and Wanaaring as well as Enngonia and Bourke following Council's representations to the State Electoral Commission. There will be an additional cost to Council of around \$2000.00 for each polling place but it will see retention of a very important part of the democratic process in each of the villages.

The good rain has meant that water restrictions were able to be lifted effective on Monday, 20th June 2016. Please always use water wisely as it is both a very important and finite resource.

Quote of the Week!

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted

- Aesop

Ross Earl
General Manager