



“From the GM’s Desk” 18th August 2016



This month’s Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, 22nd August and will commence at 2.30pm and the Public Forum will be at 4.00pm.

The Meeting will be followed by a small function to mark the end of the quadrennial term of Council.

The good flows in the river should continue for a while yet which is good news for all those along the river system. It will also mean that a good supply of water should be available for irrigation purposes after a period of limited availability which has impacted on the ability of the cotton growers to plant crops and the resultant impact on the local economy.

As we move into spring I would encourage all residents to keep their nature strips clean and tidy and in doing so significantly improve the appearance of the town.

When using the parks and ovals or generally walking around town, please use the rubbish bins provided to dispose of your rubbish. Quite often there is a considerable amount of litter left behind for either the function organisers or Council staff to clean up and with a little bit of thought much of this additional work could be avoided.

“Do the right thing - put it in the bin”

There will be an election in Bourke Shire Council with 13 candidates nominating for the ten (10) positions on Council. The elections will be held on Saturday, 10th September 2016.

The Elections for Bourke Shire Council are being conducted by the State Electoral Commission and all details in relation to the election are available on their website www.votensw.info this includes arrangements for pre-poll voting and postal voting.

Advertisements appearing in the Western Herald today show the location of polling places as well as a list of candidates and again this information is available from the website www.votensw.info

A very noticeable absence from the list of candidates is the current Mayor, Councillor Andrew Lewis who after fourteen (14) years on Council and the last eight (8) as Mayor and also a period of Deputy Mayor has elected not to recontest this election and will retire from public office and focus on his private interests.

Andrew's has made a positive contribution to Bourke Shire and Local Government in the western region of New South Wales.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled to be held on Monday, 26th September 2016, it is at this meeting that the new Mayor will be elected. All Councillors cease to hold office at midnight on the 9th September 2016 and those ten (10) Councillors to serve for the next quadrennial term will be determined on the declaration of the poll following the 10th September election.

There are a number of other Mayors from around the district who have also elected to not to recontest the upcoming elections, including the current Chair of the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) Councillor Bill McAnally who is the Mayor of Narromine and Councillor Wincen Cuy the current popularly elected Mayor of Broken Hill City Council.

Councillor McAnally has been a tremendous worker for OROC during his time as Chair. Councillor Andrew Lewis was one of the Deputy Chairs of OROC so there will be a significant changing of the guard in that organisation.

Many people underestimate the amount of work done whilst holding these regional positions and the fact that they generally require a significant amount of travelling and often being available at short notice to attend meetings and deal with issues.

Council wishes to advise residents they can report street lights which are not functioning correctly by contacting Essential Energy on 13 20 80 or by visiting www.essentialenergy.com.au/streetlight

Investigations in relation to the leak in the Charles Street reservoir are continuing. Until the assessment is completed, the remedial action and the cost of that action will not be known.

Councils as of last Friday moved into what is termed as "caretaker mode", which comes into effect for the four (4) weeks prior to the elections and means that Council is unable to:-

- Enter into any contract or undertaking involving an expenditure or receipt by the Council of an amount equal to or greater than \$150,000 or 1% of the Council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year (whichever is the larger).
- Determine a controversial development application, except where a failure to make such a determination would give rise to a deemed refusal, or such a deemed refusal arose before the commencement of the caretaker period. The term "controversial development application" is defined as one for which at least 25 persons have made submissions by way of objection.
- Appointing or renewing the appointment of the General Manager or terminating their employment. (This does not include the appointment of an acting or temporary General Manager).

- In particular cases, these functions may be exercised with the approval of the Minister.
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Council has had to update its Local Emergency Management Plan and much of the work in this regard has now been completed and will be circulated to all members of the Local Emergency Management Committee for their comments and hopefully, subsequent endorsement. The plan highlights the greatest risks within the Council area as well as identifying key personnel, location of emergency evacuations centres, control facilities plus much more information in a concise document able to be utilised in times of emergency.

The water storage facility at Byrock is full, which good news is for the residents of the village who are reliant on this non- potable supply for much of their everyday usage.

Council is mindful of the limited supply storage at Byrock and as mentioned in previous columns sought and obtained approval to undertake emergency carting if and when that situation arises.

The first meeting of the Inaugural StateCover Advisory Board to which I have been recently appointed as a representative is scheduled for the 15th September in Sydney and I am looking forward to representing the interests of all Councils on that Board and in particular ensuring issues relevant to regional and rural New South Wales Councils are addressed.

Well done to Council's roadworks gangs who worked extremely hard to ensure that the road network was brought back to a good condition following the recent heavy rainfall.

From the positive comments received by Council from those traveling to Louth for the races it seemed that most people were impressed that the roads were able to be presented so well despite the ongoing issues with the wet weather and damage caused by usage during that period.

A representative from Echelon the auditing arm of our Liability Insurers Statewide Mutual was in Bourke to undertake an audit of our Work Health and Safety systems and in doing so interview a number of staff including all managers and myself as well as undertaking an audit of the documentation that Council has available. The audit was undertaken at the request of Council and aimed at ensuring that Council has compliant systems and more importantly that these systems are utilised. It is essentially designed to ensure that Council is meeting its obligation in respect of Workplace Health and Safety.

A meeting is being scheduled this week involving Bourke, Brewarrina and Walgett Shires to develop an implementation plan relating for the funding received by the three (3) Councils under the Office of Local Government Innovation Fund. The Councils will be working closely with both Waste Aid and Netwaste to ensure that the funding provides some tangible results for all three (3) Local Government areas.

Quote of the week!

Striving for success without hard work is like trying to harvest where you haven't planted

David Bly

Ross Earl
General Manager