



“From the GM’s Desk” 3rd November 2016



Advice has been received from the Minister of Local Government, the Hon. Paul Toole, MP that the closing date for the lodgement of submissions in relation to the consultation paper prepared on the Far West Initiative (FWI) have been extended until the 16th December 2016.

There are still three (3) communities, Tibooburra, Wanaaring and Ivanhoe within the region to be covered by the Far West Initiative that are yet to have the community consultation meetings conducted in their town due to the road closures and the impact on the ability of the facilitators to get to the venues and the residents from the surrounding areas to travel in to attend the meetings.

The proposed formation of the FWI has the potential to significantly change the operation of Local Government and the delivery of other Government services and it is important that residents take the time to familiarise themselves with the Consultation Paper and make a submission.

Copies of the paper can be found on the website at
<http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au/far-west-initiative>

Copies of both the consultation paper and background paper are available at the Bourke Public Library and the Shire Offices and if required.

In an effort to increase its communication and contact with all sectors of the community Bourke Shire Council has launched its own Facebook page.

The Facebook page will complement the information currently available in the website and will include such things as road condition reports, Council’s Events, notification of planned water outages and seek feedback in relation to planned activities.

<https://www.facebook.com/bourkeshirecouncil>

The Darling River peaked at Bourke at 10.31 metres last Sunday, 30th October 2016 and the high river levels are expected to last for some weeks.

With the good winter rains bringing a fantastic season for pasture growth, which is evident right across the shire, it also brings the heightened risk of bushfires and I would ask that all residents be mindful of the risk and do their best to ensure that the risk of fire is minimised. This includes ensuring that any outbreak is able to be contained. One of the obvious risk minimisation factors is not to light fires in open areas but care can also be taken to ensure undergrowth is reduced and that any build-up of rubbish is minimised, particularly in and around buildings.

There will be further consideration given to the location of the playground equipment for which Council recently received a grant. The initial proposal saw Jones Park as the idea location, however, other existing parks will also be considered should they meet the criteria under the funding conditions.

Council earlier this year in response to a request from local residents raised an issue of the village of Barringun being identified on some computer applications and by some sections of the Emergency Services as being located on the Queensland side of the boarder which had resulted in confusion in a number of areas including mail delivery and the dispatch of emergency services for accidents. The problem was also raised within the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC).

With the assistance of the Geographical Names Board the situation is now in the process of being rectified with the village of Barringun being deemed a "locality" in its own right. The process will require the calling of submissions and will take around three (3) months to finalise. Whilst seeming a relatively minor issue on the service the delays in the dispatch of emergency services could be a matter of live or death and it is a great result to seen a resolution not far away.

The next meeting of the Bourke Shire Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) is to be held on the 8th November 2016 with all agencies involved in the provision of emergency services being invited to be represented. One of the major items on the agenda is the consideration of the adoption of the Emergency Management Plan for Bourke.

The Remembrance Day commemoration service will be held at the Cenotaph in Central Park on the 11th November 2016. Persons intending to participate in the services are asked to be at the cenotaph no later the 10.50am. The Bourke Remembrance Day Service is coordinated by the local RSL and enquiries can be directed to Victor Bartley.

Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman reminds residents that on each Monday he will be available to meet with residents between 2.00pm and 4.00pm at the Council Offices. There have already been a number of people who have taken the opportunity to speak to Mayor Hollman on a variety of issues and where possible he will try and provide a solution or a way forward on the issues raised with him.

Council would like to give early notification that the Council Offices, the Library, Services NSW and The Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre will close on the afternoon of the 23rd December 2016 and will re-open on the 2nd January 2016. The Waste Management Depot will be closed on the statutory Public Holidays being, Christmas Day Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The Waste Depot will be closed on Sunday, 25th December 2016 and Monday, 26th December 2016 being Christmas Day and Boxing Day and will be open on Tuesday, 27th and Wednesday, 28th December. The Waste Depot will be closed on Sunday, 1st January 2017 for New Year's Day but otherwise business as usual.

Waste collections will remain unchanged.

Council completed a submission to the Office of Local Government in respect of the recently announced boundaries for the Joint Organisations (JOs) which are proposed for establishment either late this year or early next year. The current proposal for the Orana JO includes all the existing members of the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) with the exception of Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar and Walgett who have been identified as members of the Far West Initiative. The Orana JO will also see the addition of Mid-Western Regional Council based in Mudgee.

Bourke Shire's submission highlighted the benefits derived from its membership of OROC and its close community of interest to the Orana region including social and economic linkages and the provision of most State Government Services. The submission lodged by the OROC Board was also supportive of the four (4) councils identified for the FWI retaining their association with the Orana Region and the Orana JO.

Council will shortly be conducting a series of community consultation meetings in each of the villages throughout the shire and the town of Bourke.

With the election of each new Council comes the requirement to review the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and the Delivery Plan. These documents provide the cornerstone for the determination of Council's priorities over the next quadrennial period for which the Council is elected. The dates for the meetings will be finalised over the next couple of weeks and will be advertised throughout the Shire. It is important to note that the determination of the strategic priorities for the shire community is not restricted to those which are solely the responsibility of Council but can also include areas which are the responsibility of the other tiers of Government. As a general rule Council undertakes an advocacy role on behalf of the community.

The Splash Park at the Bourke Pool is starting to take shape and it is still on track to be opened by the end of the month.

It is interesting to note that the Splash Park was in fact one of the items which was identified as a priority in the compilation of the Bourke Community Strategic Plan developed in 2012 and it is good to see it finally come to fruition. The fact that it was identified as a community priority would have been of assistance when the merit of the funding application was being considered.

Quote of the week!

"Life is like a camera. Just focus on what's important and capture the good times, develop from the negatives and if things don't work out just take another shot."

Ross Earl
General Manager