



“From the GM’s Desk”

11th May 2017



Local Government New South Wales is again asking all its member Councils to complete a cost Shifting Survey which is aimed at trying to identify and quantify the cost to Local Government resulting from the gradual shifting of costs from the State Government over a number of years. In some instances these costs have resulted from legislative change, in other instances Councils are now required to meet expenditure which was previously a function of the State, and also where the real term level of contribution or in some instances where Local Government has been forced to supplement the contribution of the State to ensure that the level of services to the community is equitable to other areas in the State.

The previous Cost Shifting Survey shows the additional expenditure incurred by Bourke Shire Council as a result of cost shifting totals around \$1 million whilst over the OROC Region (excluding Mid-Western) it was over \$12.5 million.

The Mayor Barry Hollman and I travelled to Broken Hill last Thursday to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Western Division Shires. The meeting focussed on the preparation of a Strategic Plan for the organisation recognising that the group had seen it’s influence as an effective lobby group wane over the past few years. The meeting was facilitated by Wagga based consultant Julie Briggs who did a good job in bringing the thoughts of all participating Councils to the table.

The outcomes of the meeting, which will form the basis of the Strategic Plan, will be circulated to all member Councils for their comment and endorsement.

Advocacy, Intergovernmental Collaboration, Resource Sharing and Funding of the organisation were key issues for all attendees.

There was a dinner held after the meeting which was held at the Palace Hotel in Broken Hill which was the location for a number of scenes for the movie “*Priscilla Queen of the Desert*” which by coincidence I saw on the previous Saturday at “Flicks in the Sticks” hosted by the Bourke Arts Council.

A reminder, that Council has reverted back to the 4th Monday of the month for the conduct of its ordinary meetings. However, the June meeting has been brought forward and the meeting day changed to Tuesday, 20th June 2016. All meetings are open to the public with the exception of those deemed to be of a confidential nature in accordance with section 10 (2) of the Local Government Act 1993.

A Public Forum is scheduled at each Council Meeting at 10.00 am. If you wish to speak at the Public Forum it would be appreciated if you could contact Kai Howard-Oakman on 68308000 or by email at khoward@bourke.nsw.gov.au so that your item can be placed on the agenda and if necessary any background information can be obtained.

A reminder that Council is calling for submissions on two (2) issues;

Firstly, a proposal that has been put forward by the Transport Industry to allow access for Type (2) Road Trains (BAB Configuration) from North Bourke to Nyngan and Trangie.

The proposed route would utilise Moculta and Tarcoon Streets past the High School and Hospital and would involve three (3) intersections in Bourke each of which has been determined as suitable following recent trials.

- Intersection of Mitchell Highway, Moculta Street and Tarcoon Streets Bourke
- Intersection of Kamilaroi Highway, Mitchell Street and Tarcoon Street Bourke
- Intersection of Mitchell Highway, Morven Street and Tarcoon Street Bourke

Secondly, Bourke Shire Council is working with the Roads and Maritime Services to name each of the rest areas within the Shire area which are currently not officially named. Council invites members of the public to submit suggestions for the names of these rest areas. The rest areas to be named are as advertised again in this weeks' Western Herald.

Further information on how to lodged submissions and maps detailing the proposed Type Two (2) Road Train (BAB Configuration) and the location of each of the Rest Areas to be named are available at the Bourke Shire Council Chambers, Bourke Public Library and on Council's website at www.bourke.nsw.gov.au

Mayor Councillor Barry Hollman and I travelled to Cobar to attend the Annual Cobar Miner's Cup at the Invitation of the President of the Race Club Jarrod Marsden and the Mayor of Cobar Lillian Brady. It was an excellent day, save for the donation we both made to the bookmakers. There was a very good crowd in attendance and the facilities and grounds presented in first class condition and very good nominations. Representatives of a number of the other smaller race clubs within the district were also in attendance to support the Cobar Club with the President of Louth, Jim Strachan and the President of Bourke, Frank Kerr amongst the large crowd.

During the trip to Broken Hill and again on route to Cobar there were a huge number of caravans on the road and in some cases taking advantage of the rest areas along the routes with up to eight caravans in some of these locations. All would seem to look good for a bumper tourist season if these early numbers are indicative of the balance of the season. We stopped both ways for coffee at "Miss Barrett's" a coffee shop operated by former Bourke local Julie Murphy in Wilcannia. Julie said that she had also noticed the significant increase in tourism activity. Tourism plays a vital part in the economy of all the western towns and it is essential that once we are able to attract tourists to our towns that we are able to offer them a pleasant and memorable experience.

All towns in the west are keen to promote their own town but at the same time are very supportive of other towns in the area and highlight the attractions of neighbouring towns in an effort to ensure that visitors are aware of these attractions and will hopefully spend a little more time in the region.

The quarterly meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) was held at the Rural Fire Service Control Centre last Tuesday with representatives of most local emergency services in attendance together with those holding regional positions. The LEMC provides a forum to determine the preparedness for the Local Emergency Services to be able respond to emergency situations and it is very importantly to develop a strong sense of collaboration and understanding amongst all agencies. In the emergency situations that have unfolded since I have been in Bourke the response by all agencies has been very well executed and is indicative of the training that all members undertake and the time spent developing response plans. As a community we should be very proud of the volunteers who not only given freely of their time but also place themselves in significant danger to help others.

On Monday, Mayor Councillor Barry and Manager of Corporate Services, Leonie Brown represented Council at the meeting of the Barwon Darling Bush Fire Management Committee (BDBFMC) held at the Rural Fire Service Control Centre at Bourke Airport. The meeting is effectively to get a report on the activities during the 2016/2017 Bushfire Season and to look at strategies for the 2017/2018 Bush fire Season. Councillor Hollman was elected as the Chair of Barwon Darling BFMC

Preparedness for bushfires is a year round project with a great deal of preparatory work including hazard reduction work being undertaken throughout the year. The cooler winter months are utilised to undertake initiatives such as controlled burns to reduce the build- up of combustible material particularly in areas of high risk.

If you enjoy a relaxing cruise on the Jandra when you have a spare afternoon or when entertaining guests why not consider purchasing an Annual Membership of the Back O Bourke Exhibition Centre and Jandra which at only \$60.00 represents excellent value given you have unlimited access to both facilities.

The Audit function of all New South Wales Councils is now undertaken by the Auditor General. The Auditor General via the NSW Audit Office in turn has appointed firms to carry out the work on his behalf. Council's previous Auditors, Hills Rogers from Sydney were appointed to continue in that role and were in town last week to undertake the half yearly audit of Council's accounting records. Whilst Hills Rogers will undertake the physical audit the oversight of the audit process and the sign off will remain with the NSW Audit Office.

Quote of the Week!

"When everything feels like an uphill struggle, just think of the view from the top."

Unknown

Ross Earl
General Manager