



## “From the GM’s Desk” 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017



Following the meeting held last Wednesday in Sydney with representatives of the Bourke Community to detail the proposed Bourke Aboriginal Employment Prosperity Strategy aimed at improving employment opportunities within Bourke, the Hon. John Barilaro, MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills and Minister for Small Business indicated that he would visit Bourke.

He indicated that the visit was likely to take place as early as July, which is great news and will provide the opportunity for Bourke to further advance the strategy and highlight some of the challenges the community faces. This opportunity will also allow the community to showcase our town and the opportunities that exist to further develop the area. Council staff will be liaising with the Deputy Premier’s Office to finalise details for the visit.

The Hon. Victor Dominello, MP, Minister for Finance, Services and Property and the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, MP, Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Assistant Minister for Education who were also at the meeting joined with the Deputy Premier in giving an undertaking to visit Bourke.

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The contingent from Bourke not only included Council representatives but also Alistair Ferguson, Chair of the Aboriginal Working Party and Chief Executive of Maranguka, Detective Inspector, Rod Grant from the Darling River Area Command and James Price representing CAPRA Pty Ltd the owners of the new abattoir. The Deputy Ombudsman, Danny Lester did much of the coordination and our thanks go to Danny for arranging and facilitating this important discussion.

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One part of the Strategy is trying to make access to State Government contracts for such things as building maintenance to be more accessible for local tradespeople. Currently many of the contacts are let on a region wide basis making it difficult for the smaller operators to submit tenders. The “unbundling” of these contacts would allow the smaller operators to submit prices and if successful increase the continuity of work and this continuity of work would in turn allow them to look to employ additional apprentices providing not only careers for many of the young people within the community but also ensuring an ongoing supply of trades people to service the area.

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While in Sydney, Council representatives met with staff from Local Government New South Wales including the Director of Advocacy, Kylie Yates, Senior Strategy Manager, Shaun McBride and Senior Policy Officer for Roads and Transport, Richard Connors.

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The representatives also met with Kevin Pugh of Treasury who was in charge of the introduction of the proposed Fire and Emergency Services Levy (FESL) prior to the decision to defer the introduction of the Levy. Our discussions with Kevin focussed on the recoupment of the expenses incurred to date by Council for all the work undertaken by staff to date assisting in the implementation of the FESL.

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Kevin Humphries, Member for Barwon has announced that he will not be contesting the elections scheduled for March 2019. Kevin has been a hardworking Local Member and each of the Local Government areas within the Barwon Electorate has benefitted considerably from his hard work. Barwon is a large and diverse area and despite the tyranny of distance Kevin has been a regular visitor to all areas and has had regular contact with Councils. We look forward to working with Kevin for the remainder of the term and will no doubt monitor developments in the selection of potential candidates for his replacement.

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Mark Horton from the Department of Sport and Recreation has offered to come to Bourke to facilitate workshops involving the sporting groups and other interested organisations and individuals to determine the identified needs and/or expectations of the community in relation to the Sporting and Recreational amenities within Bourke.

The results of the workshops will be the first step in developing the Master Plan for the Sporting and Recreational facilities in Bourke and ensuring that the needs of all groups are considered in the planning process.

The first of the two (2) workshops will be held at the Bourke Shire Council Chambers on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017 the second will be held on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

#### **PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATES**

The workshops will commence at 5.30pm and finish by 7.30pm.

All sporting and recreational groups are encouraged to attend with the workshops intending to get input from a broad cross section of the community. The younger members of the community are particularly encouraged to attend as it is important that the needs of this section of our community are met.

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Bourke Shire Council will be meeting with the Manager of Nursing and Midwifery Services of Western District Health Services, Joy Adams and Alison Loudon also of Western District Health Services on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June in relation to the provision of midwifery and maternity services to the women of Bourke since the closure of the Birthing Unit in 2015. One of the areas to be discussed is the "Model of Care" that has been developed although not widely disseminated.

The meeting is scheduled for 2.00pm and will be held in the Council Chambers at 29 Mitchell Street Bourke; anyone who is interested in midwifery and maternity services in the District is invited to attend.

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A reminder, that Council has reverted back to the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday for the conduct of its normal monthly meetings. **However, the June meeting has been previously changed to Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017 commencing at 9.00am.**

The meeting is an important meeting with Council to consider any submissions in relation to the Draft Community Strategic Plan, the Delivery Program 2017-2021 and the Operational Plan (Budget) 2017/2018. The adoption of all these documents will to a very large degree shape the future direction for Council in the immediate and longer terms.

Also for Councils consideration is the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) which has also been advertised for public comment.

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Next Tuesday's meeting will also see Council make the rates for 2017/2018 following the adoption of the 2017/2018 Operational Plan. Whilst the proposed increase in General Rates is capped at 1.5% this figure relates to the total rates levied by Council. Following the revaluation of all properties in preparation for the introduction of the now defunct Fire and Emergency Services Levy (FESL) there will be some variances on the individual rates assessment depending on whether the increase in the land value was more or less than the average for the rating category.

It is anticipated that the rate notices for 2017/2018 will go out in mid- July.

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Mayor Councillor Barry Hollman is generally available between **2.00 pm to 3.00pm** of a Monday at the Council Chambers to discuss any issues residents may wish to raise with him. An exception is the 4th Monday of each Month which of course is Council Meeting Day. He is also available by appointment by contacting Kai Howard-Oakman at Council's Offices by calling 02 68 308 000 or by email [khoward@bourke.nsw.gov.au](mailto:khoward@bourke.nsw.gov.au)

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Bourke Rotary Club will conduct their Changeover next Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> June and Leonie Brown will assume the role of President, Meredith Thompson Secretary and Lisa Crothers Treasurer. The theme of Rotary International for 2017/218 is *Rotary Making a Difference*". Bourke Rotary Club have a proud history of "making a difference" in the Bourke community and would welcome enquiries from members of the community keen to "make a difference".

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The Western Division Councils will hold their mid-term meeting in Cobar on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Included on the agenda are the President of Local Government New South Wales, Keith Rhoades who always provides a valuable insight to Local Government on a State wide basis, Azaria Dobson from the Department of Planning who will provide an update on the Far West Regional Plan whilst Ashley Albury from the Department of Premier and Cabinet will also provide an update on Regional Development issues. Annalisa Haskell the CEO of Local Government Professionals will also be on hand to provide an overview of that organisation's Performance Excellence Program.

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*Quote of the Week!*

*"The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not in fighting the old, but on building the new.*

*Socrates*

Ross Earl  
General Manager