



“From the GM’s Desk”

17th August 2017



Representatives from Bulloo Shire Council will be visiting Bourke this weekend to review the Bourke Tourist attractions and to look at the way that Bourke has developed into a Tourist Destination. There will be a combination of Councillors and staff members from Bullo Shire as well local tourist facility owners and operators and the visit will provide the opportunity for Bourke to showcase its attractions including the Jandra, Back O’ Bourke Exhibition Centre and the Crossley Engine.

The group are keen to meet up with those involved in tourism within Bourke to learn from their experiences so any mistakes that may have been made are not replicated. Based at Thargomindah, Bullo Shire shares a boundary with Bourke and provides an opportunity to develop this cross border relationship and to capitalise on the opportunities that exist for the promotion of both Council areas. Whilst the group are in Bourke, Bulloo Shire Mayor, Tractor Ferguson and Bourke Mayor, Barry Hollman will sign a memorandum of understanding between the two (2) Councils which is the first step in building what should prove to be a mutually beneficial relationship.

It is hoped in the not too distant future to include Brewarrina and Walgett Shires from the New South Wales side of the border and Paroo and Balonne Shires from the Queensland side in a substantially increased level of cross border cooperation and promotion in relation to tourism in particular. The northwest of NSW and the south west of Queensland provide that “outback experience” that many tourists are seeking.

Thargomindah was the first town in Australia, and third in the world, to produce hydro-electric power for street lighting by using the water pressure from the Artesian Basin.

The Thargomindah Artesian Hydro Power Plant is believed to be the oldest, working unit in Australia, and possibly the world!

The next meeting of Council will be held on Monday, 28th August 2017 and a public forum will be held at 10.00 am with members of the public welcome to attend to raise any issues with Councils. Persons wishing to present at the meeting are encouraged to contact Kai Howard-Oakman on 68308000.

The Louth Races were once again a huge success with the village bursting at the seams to cater for the very large crowd which started to arrive last week and enjoy the friendly and welcome hospitality of the Louth community. The road to Louth was in good condition despite the dry weather and I received a number of positive comments which were very much appreciated.

The grant applications in respect of the Stronger Regional Communities Fund were lodged well before the deadline and Council will be looking forward to a favourable response to the applications which predominately reflected the views of the community through the extensive sessions of community consultation undertaken in the development of both the Community Strategic Plan and the Strategic Plan in relation to the Sporting Facilities within Bourke.

The grant application for the first year includes the following items:-

1. North Bourke Rejuvenation

This application focused on upgrading facilities in North Bourke; including new toilets and shaded play equipment to enhance use of the North Bourke Oval. In addition, Council also intends to replace the boat ramp in order to allow larger boats (i.e. SES Boat) easier access to the river. Improved drainage works will ensure safer vehicle access and compliment the new boat ramp.

2. Central Park - Be Active, Social and Safe

The Bourke Central Park is extensively used by families, young people, community groups and visitors to the town. This extensive upgrade will include the addition of new toilets, an all hours basketball/netball court, a new fence around the tennis courts, a shade sail over the skate park and the installation of tennis court lighting. These improvements, particularly the inclusion of public toilets, will further increase the use of Central Park and add to the amenity of the area.

3. Davidson Park Upgrade

The project will enhance the existing sports precinct and additional lighting will provide an opportunity for Davidson Oval to "rest" during winter as it is used daily, either for training or competition sports. In addition, an upgrade of the canteen area will increase usage and volunteer engagement. Improvements are designed to enhance the area, entice more volunteers to get involved and ensure the long-term viability of local clubs.

It is important to note that as part of the approval process for the grants the residents of Bourke will be subject to a survey from an independent organisation seeking feedback as to whether or not the applications reflect the requirements of the community. As part of this process 100 people will be randomly selected to be asked for their opinion.

Council has extended an invitation to the Minister for Roads Maritime and Freight Hon Melinda Pavey MP to visit Bourke Shire and officially open the new bridges across the Cuttaburra Creek which are located approximately 150 kilometres west of Bourke. The replacement of previous timber bridges was part of Council's Bridge Replacement Program which has now been completed with all timber bridges within Bourke Shire being replaced by concrete structures.

The work on the new playground equipment in Jones Park has commenced and the work should be completed in around two (2) weeks. The additional playground equipment will be welcomed by the local children as well as the number of tourists who take the opportunity to stop and stretch their legs. Funding for the equipment has been made available from Round 2 of 2016 Social Community Housing Improvement Fund which is administered by the Department of Family and Community Services.

While the chilly nights are still with us it is only about eight (8) weeks before the Bourke Swimming Pool is opened for the 2017/2018 swimming season. Work is currently being undertaken to ensure that the pool is in readiness for the seasons opening with the replacement of tiles where they have lifted and general maintenance being undertaken. The aging facility takes increased maintenance each year and at the possible replacement of the pool was the raised at the Strategic Planning meetings held recently in relation to sporting facilities. Despite its age the pool is still a very

serviceable facility and the addition of the splash park last year has added significantly to the attraction of the pool.

Six (6) new street bins have been purchased for installation in the CBD area to provide adequate facilities for the disposal of rubbish in the area and to ensure that the area is always neat and tidy.

The bins are fully enclosed and complement the streetscape.

All residents are encouraged to “do the right thing- put it in the bin”.

The construction of the new Fitness Equipment Facility in Central Park is almost finished and should be available for use on the weekend. The Fitness Centre will provide 24 hour facilities for those wishing to build their fitness without having to go to the gym and will be a welcome addition to the facilities in Central Park. With other improvements in the park for Central Park it should result in an increase patronage by all sectors of the community. The park already offers good facilities and is often the subject of a number of positive comments from tourists and visitors.

Senior Inspector with Safe Work NSW, Keven Pile was in town last week undertaking an educative role with some of the local businesses and took the opportunity to call in on Council to outline some of the changes in legislation which may impact on Council.

Worksafe NSW has a strong emphasis on education and providing advice and support for employers with prosecution generally being last resort.

CAPRA Developments Pty Ltd the proponents of the new Abattoir have engaged Bourke Shire Council to undertake the construction of the entrance to the complex. Given that the entrance is coming off a State Highway the project has to be done in accordance of the direction and requirements of the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) and also in accord with the provisions of the development consent in relation to the project. The ability of Council’s Engineering staff to be able to produce work which meets all the required RMS standards and, on time, and on budget was no doubt a factor in the decision to utilise Council for the work.

Quote of the Week!

*The past is your lesson,
The present is your gift
The future is your motivation*

Ross Earl
General Manager