



# “From the GM’s Desk”

## 2nd November 2017



Bourke Shire Council has received its 2016/2017 Audited Financial Statements from the New South Wales Auditor General, it once again indicates that Council is a strong financial position and that Council's financial records have been kept in accordance with the appropriate Accounting Standards, Accounting Codes of Practice applicable to Local Government and other legislative requirements.

This is the first time that New South Wales Councils, including, Bourke Shire's Financial Reports have been subject to audit by the New South Wales Auditor General and there have been a number of requirements that came with the changes that have needed to be addressed. Despite the anticipated teething problems Council staff have been able to comply with the new requirements and requests for the additional information and the audit process was completed successfully.

The process was greatly assisted by the level of cooperation and understanding shown by all parties involved in the audit process.

The 2016/2017 Financial Reports for Bourke Shire Council will be presented to the next Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> November with Gary Mottau of Hills Rogers representing the Auditor General in presenting the Audit Report to Council which will be done via video Conference.

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The New South Wales' Office of Sport have indicated that they will be conducting learn to swim classes for children in Bourke commencing on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and finishing on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018. These classes will be held at the Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool. The Office of Sport have also indicated that they are always looking for people who are trained as a swimming instructor or are keen to gain accreditation as national learn to swim instructor.

For Information on both matters you can go to [sport@nsw.gov.au/swimandsurvive](mailto:sport@nsw.gov.au/swimandsurvive)

The Office of Sport runs children's learn to swim classes right across the state, given the large tracks of water both inland and surrounding our nation learning to swim is very important with swimming one of the most popular recreation pursuits. I would encourage everyone to take advantage of the opportunity to have your children taught to swim.

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The Annual General Meeting of Barwon Darling Water will be held at Bourke Shire Chambers on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and will be followed by an Ordinary meeting of that organisation. Mr Mark McKenzie CEO of the New South Wales Irrigators Council will be a guest speaker at the AGM.

Barwon Darling Water brings together water users along the Barwon-Darling System including Local Government who are large users through their respective water supplies.

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The repairs to the bridge over the Cuttaburra Creek on the Hungerford Road have been finalised and the road has once again been opened to all traffic.

While agreeing it is a pity that there is no water in the Cuttaburra at the moment the fact that it was dry was a big benefit in enabling the repairs to be undertaken quickly. The widespread rain did cause some initial anxious moments from the contractors who had just moved in some of their heavy equipment but the rainfall, which was very welcome, did not impede the work from being carried out as planned.

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Nomination forms for the 2018 Australia Day Awards are now available from Councils Offices and can also be down loaded from Council's website [www.bourke.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bourke.nsw.gov.au)

If you think there is someone, an organisation or an event that you feel is worthy of a nomination **don't say "someone should nominate them - be that someone."**

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The 2017 Graffiti Removal Day held on Sunday attracted only a small number of volunteers so as a result the removal efforts concentrated around Central Park and Jones Park. Those two (2) areas are certainly much improved as a result of the efforts of the volunteers on the day.

Council still has a number of graffiti removal kits available and kits will be sent out to each of the villages so that they can also get involved in the graffiti removal initiative.

Unfortunately the removal of graffiti is an ongoing project and it is proposed to continue with the removal over the next few weeks with the assistance of Council Staff.

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Bourke Shire Council has received funding of \$102,857 under the 2016/2017 Natural Disaster Resilience Program's Flood Plains Grants Scheme to undertake a Flood Plain Risk Management Study and Plan at Louth. The funding is provided on the understanding that Bourke Shire will contribute \$17,148.00 to the project. The work will be coordinated by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and should be finalised in the first half of 2018.

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On Tuesday I will attend the quarterly Meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) on which I serve as the Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) with Councils being responsible for the provide 'executive support' to the LEMC which includes the provision of secretarial support. However, when there is an incident it is controlled by the Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) who is generally the Commanding Officer of the Local Area Command (LAC), or an officer nominated by the Commander.

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Manager of Tourism and Economic Development, Charles Liggett and I, last week travelled to Nyngan to meet with representatives of the other six (6) Councils with whom we have been grouped for the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) Program that is being funded by The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

The Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD) is a part of DPC and has identified 32 Functional Economic Regions (FER) across NSW that will receive funding support in this program. The Western Plains Region which includes Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Coonamble, Walgett and Warren Shire Councils been identified as a Functional Economic Region (FER) for the purposes of the REDS project. The Group has been the called the Western Plains Group of Councils.

The program will be based on a uniform economic development methodology that is evidence based, formed on a defensible statistical foundation and will be tailored to each FER as it is recognised that each region will have unique characteristics.

The program objectives are to:

1. Build on existing strengths in the region and enhance those strengths
2. Identify new opportunities to enhance the development, performance and competitiveness of the region;
3. Assist the region on the path towards its sustainable economic development; and
4. Help prepare Local Government Councils to access the unprecedented investment the NSW Government is making in regional NSW

Given the size of the proposed region the potential for subsets of the region being established has been raised and is something that should be pursued as it may be much easier for smaller groups to achieve positive outcomes rather than try and cover the large geographic area covered by the "Western Plains Group of Councils.

Warrumbungle and Gilgandra for example are one functional area as is Dubbo Regional and Narromine and it is much easier to identify the synergies in these smaller areas.

Council will work with the consultants "The Balmoral Group" to ensure that it gets the best outcomes for our region.

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I would once again reminded people that if you wish to use Council's parks and facilities for a function you need to **BOOK** the facility so that appropriate arrangements can be made to have the facility properly presented and that there is no clash with another organisation.

There is generally no fee attached to the bookings but it does make it much easier to coordinate the use of parks if bookings are made.

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## Quote of the Week!

*Natural ability is important, but you can go far without it if you have the focus, drive, desire and positive attitude.*

*Kirsten Sweetland*

Ross Earl  
General Manager