



“From the GM’s Desk”

17th May 2018



I attended a meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) held on Tuesday, 8th May 2018 that brought together representatives from all the emergency services within Bourke. The role of chair sits with Council and I currently undertake that role. The LEMC’s role is in part to develop a high degree of cooperation and support amongst the various agencies and its success in this role is evident both during exercises and real life situations.

There is an excellent level of rapport between agencies and a good understanding of the capabilities and resources each agency possesses.

A guest speaker at the last meeting was Susie Gibbs an ex-Bourkite who is now working with Fire and Rescue New South Wales.

Susie detailed her plans to hold an Emergency Services Expo in Bourke in August with a view to both consolidating the relationship between the services and the community and at the same time providing information on career opportunities.

This is a good initiative and has been supported by the Office of Emergency Management.

Members of the MANEX Team took the opportunity to participate in a teleconference in relation to the benefits of installing solar panels on some of Council’s facilities with a view to putting in place strategies to assist in reducing the seemingly ever increasing cost of electricity. A number of Council’s sites were identified as suitable for the installation of panels with budgetary provision already being made for the installation of solar panels at the Anson Street Depot.

Bourke Shire Council invited all businesses involved in the Tourism Industry within the Shire to join them for a familiarisation exercise relating to the tourist facilities offered by Council and others within Bourke Shire. The familiarisation exercise was held on Wednesday, 16th May 2018 starting at 9.30am with a cruise on the Jandra. Following the cruise there is the opportunity for all Tourism Operators to attend the brand new “Outback Show” at 11.00am at the Back O’ Bourke Exhibition Centre and in the afternoon go through the Back O’ Bourke Exhibition Centre.

“Poetry on a Plate” has also made complimentary tickets available for anyone who would like to attend one of their shows, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday nights at Kidman’s Camp.

The opportunity will exist for all operators attending to be able to have a few minutes whilst on the Jandra to highlight what their business has to offer tourism in Bourke Shire.

Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman indicated that the event was designed to bring all those involved in the tourist industry together and more importantly ensure that they are all familiar with all the tourist attractions within Bourke Shire. This will ensure that they can all combine to promote the various attractions and encourage our tourist to stay a little longer and visit those attractions.

Tourism has significant economic benefits for our shire and the whole west of the state and it is important that we grow the tourism industry

Council Auditors were in Bourke last week to conduct the mid –year audit. One of the areas that the audit focussed on was the transfer of records from Councils old accounting system to Councils new system Practical Plus. The migration of records seemed to have gone very smoothly with no significant fails were identified with the transfer to the new system. The fact that the transfer went so well was due to both the hard work put in by Councils internal implementation team and Consultant Laurie Knight and the team from practical plus who worked very cohesively to make the transition relatively seamless.

Council has placed advertisements in the local press calling for expressions of interest from someone keen to take over the running of the Back O' Bourke Café. The café in my view presents a great opportunity for someone keen to try their hand operating their own business with limited outlay required in what is a modern, well equipped and fully furnished facility. Enquiries can be directed to the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre.

I have previously indicated that work has commenced on the coordination of the 2019 Western Division in Bourke on the 23rd 24th and 25th February 2018 and I am pleased to advise that the Deputy Premier, the Hon. John Barilaro, MP has agreed to open the Conference.

The Western Division Conference has over the years been an important forum for Local Government in the west to have a collective voice on issues of concern. It is important that ability is maintained by this collective voice if the issues impacting on the communities in the far west are to be heard.

Council will shortly be calling tenders for the Management of the Bourke War Memorial Swimming Pool for the next three (3) years. The tender documents are currently being finalised.

The Environmental Water Flow which has been the result of a great deal of work by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holders Office, The NSW Department of Environment and Heritage and NSW Office of Water is gradually making its way down the river system with releases having been made from both Copeton and Glenlyon Dams. The flow has been termed the Northern Connectivity Event. The flow reached Walgett and is expected to reach Brewarrina this week (week beginning 14th May) and then reach Bourke during the week beginning 21st May 2018. It will then take about another week to reach Louth and a further week to reach Tilpa. The flow should be in Wilcannia towards the end of June.

As Part of the recognition of the flow, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holders Office is holding a series of events along the river system to mark the significance of the event. The venues will provide the opportunity to learn a little more about the event which is making its way down 2000kms of some the great rivers of the northern Murray Darling Basin. River scientists will be available to talk with people about the ongoing health of the Darling.

Events are planned for Walgett on the 15th May, Collarenebri on the 16th Mungindi on the 17th and Brewarrina on the 24th May with dates for Wilcannia, Goondiwindi and Moree to occur in coming weeks.

The Bourke event will be held on the 31st May 2018 at the Wal Mitchell Wharf Precinct.

Despite the good flows in the Darling River there are still alerts along the river system in relation to the presence of blue green algae. In a number of instances the level of algal numbers has reduced, however, further low readings are required before the warnings can be reduced to a lower level.

Within Bourke Shire there are amber alerts in place at the Bourke Wharf, Bourke Weir and Louth whilst a green alert is in place at the Bourke Boat Ramp.

For more detail of the alerts in place and for an explanation of what the respective alerts mean is on the Water NSW Website

www.waternsw.com.au/water-quality/algae

The next OROC Board Meeting is to be held on Thursday, 7th June 2018 in Coonabarabran on the evening prior to the meeting there will be a joint dinner involving the OROC Board Members and the members of the Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance Technical Committee to mark the 10 year milestone of the Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance. The Alliance has been hugely successful over the years and has been acknowledged as an excellent example of Local Government collaboration and cooperation. Initially starting with six (6) members now involves all members of OROC plus Central Darling Shire.

The OROC Board meeting will no doubt be considering the future operation of OROC with the proposed establishment of the Orana Joint Organisation of Councils. Five (5) members of OROC have previously resolved to join the JO and will be included in the establishment proclamation. The Councils that have already resolved to join are Gilgandra, Mid-Western, Warrumbungle, Narromine and Cobar. Warren have also recently resolved to join and will be subject to a proclamation at a later date.

The charter of the Orana JO once determined will in some way influence the role that OROC will play in the future as there does not need to be a duplication of functions.

OROC has been very successful as a regional advocacy group in the past and can in all probability continue in that role in the future. However, the changing landscape for Local Government brought about by the establishment of JOs may well determine the future direction and operation of OROC.

Along with the Mayors and General Managers of Walgett, Brewarrina, Central Darling, Balranald, Wentworth, Cobar Shires and Broken Hill City Council the Mayor Barry Hollman and I will be attending a meeting at Parliament House on Wednesday, 16th May 2018 with the Deputy Premier, the Hon. John Barilaro, MP. The two (2) local Members whose electorates cover the footprint of those

Councils, Kevin Humphries, MP the Member for Barwon and Austin Evans, the Member for Murray and the Parliamentary Secretary for Western New South Wales, the Hon. Rick Colless, MLC will also be in attendance with the meeting intended to review the plans for the Far West of the State under the current Local Government Reform Process.

Among the items to be discussed at the May meeting of Council will be the consideration of any submissions received in relation to the 2018/2019 Operational Plan prior to its adoption.

While Bourke only receive around 10 millilitres of rain last week it was very welcome and will make a significant difference to the lawns and gardens as the impact of such a fall is much greater than when a similar amount of water is applied via sprinklers or hand held hoses.

Local Government New South Wales will be conducting one of their Regional Summits in Cobar on Tuesday, 3rd July, the opportunity will be taken to hold the Mid-Term Meeting of Western Division at the same time to negate the need for further travel for Council representatives which makes a lot of sense.

These summits will provide members with the opportunity to raise issues important to them and their local communities with the President, Board Members and Staff of LGNSW.

As part of the redevelopment of the CBD a roundabout was planned to be installed at the intersection of Oxley and Sturts Streets, however, due to a number of issues this part of the project has been revised and there will be now a four (4) way intersection installed.

Our Local Member, Kevin Humphries, MP has arranged for the Minister for Tourism in New South Wales, the Hon. Adam Marshall, MP to visit Bourke on the morning of the 29th May 2018 for a meeting with the Councils from both Far North West New South Wales and South West Queensland in relation to the development of a Cross Border Strategy for tourism promotion to be developed and progressed.

There has been a strong level of interest from all Councils and at this stage Walgett, Cobar and Brewarrina from the NSW side and Paroo, Bulloo and Balonne Shire from the Queensland side will be in attendance.

Minister Marshall is a strong advocate for Regional Tourism and the Councils are appreciative of the fact that he has made the time to visit Bourke.

The meeting is planned to start at 9.00am and should go for about two (2) hours.

The meeting will be held at the Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre Café and the opportunity available to delegates from the other Councils to visit this remarkable tourism facility.

Council has submitted its applications under the Stronger Country Communities Fund which also allowed community organisations to submit application via Council. At the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on the 2nd May 2018, Council endorsed the following projects in order of priority.

In Round 2 of the Stronger Countries Communities Funding required at least 50% of the funding applications to involve sporting facilities.

Priority	Project	Grant Amount	Council Contribution	Total cost
1	Central Park Refurbishment	\$258,362		\$258,362
2	Bourke War Memorial Pool Upgrade (co contribution by Council \$900,000 loan)	\$930,500	\$900,000	\$1,830,500
3	Wharf Safety Upgrade	\$60,000		\$60,000
4	Main Street Development	\$300,000		\$300,000
5	Pool WHS Upgrade	\$50,000		\$50,000
6	Village Beautification Works	\$200,000		\$200,000
7	Levee Walk Stage 1	\$100,000		\$100,000
8	Signage Entry to town	\$50,000		\$50,000
9	SES Shed for New Rescue Vehicle	\$100,000		\$100,000
10	Fencing at Sporting Precinct i.e. Davidson and Cooligan Ovals and Pool	\$352,240		\$352,240
11	Stage 2 Levee Walk	\$100,000		\$100,000
12	PCYC - Upgrade	\$502,393		\$502,393
13	2WEB- refurbishment of Studios	\$146,587		\$146,587

Quote of the week!

"The only source of knowledge is experience"- Albert Einstein

Ross Earl
General Manager