



“From the GM’s Desk”

9th August 2018



On Wednesday, 25th July 2018 the Inaugural Board Meeting of the Far North West Joint Organisation (FNWJO) was held in Bourke. The FNWJO consists of Bourke, Cobar and Walgett.

Mayor Lillian Brady was elected to the position of Chair and General Manager of Cobar Shire Council Peter Vlatko will act as the Executive Officer for the interim period until a permanent Executive Officer is appointed.

Work has officially commenced with the board identifying key priorities. These priorities include air services, health, drought support, infrastructure funding and education. The Executive Officer will be writing to all three (3) Councils requesting a list of their strategic priorities that they would like the board to focus on. This list may grow from those responses.

There seems to be no significant rainfall predicted for the far northwest area of New South Wales and little relief for the farming fraternity in sight with many already experiencing a severe shortage of water and feed.

The weir ceased to flow on Monday, when the depth drops to 3.95 meters, residents of Bourke and North Bourke are advised that that due to no imminent inflow into the weir pool Bourke and North Bourke will commence Level 1 water restrictions effective from midday today, Thursday, 9th August 2018.

Fortunately, there is only a limited need for water on town gardens at this time of the year, minimising the demand on extractions.

All roads lead to Louth this week and next weekend, to share in the activities for the 60th Louth race meeting. Whilst an enormous amount of work has been done by the enthusiastic dedicated committee, Council has been contributing by mowing the public areas in the village, and checking the general services provided. Council roads to Louth have also received attention with grading, not helped due to the lack of soil moisture.

My congratulations are extended to the Bourke Warriors, Grand Final victors and to the support personnel and club for their deserved, hard fought victory on Saturday. After all the hard yards throughout the season it is a pity there has to be one winner, but a triumph when you are in that team.

Long serving employee Peter (Boogs) Robinson worked his last shift with Council in early July taking annual leave until last Friday when he officially resigned, Peter was given a farewell morning tea by his workmates. Boogs clocked up 25 years of service with Council and for much of that time he started in the early hours of the morning on the rubbish truck.

I would like to join with the Councillors and staff in offering congratulations and thank you to Boogs for his service and wish Peter and Leanne all the best for the future.

Spare a thought for Mayor, Cr Barry Hollman who has had a busy week. Last Monday the 30th July Barry attended a meeting held by the Premier, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP and the Deputy Premier the Hon. John Barilaro in Bathurst. This meeting was to officially launch the 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW.

On Thursday the 2nd August the Mayor attended a meeting in Dubbo to meet the Board of Destination NSW Board and Destination Country & Outback Board members.

On Monday, 6th August, this week I travelled with the Mayor to Cobar to attend the half yearly meeting of the Western Divisions of Councils.

The next Ordinary Meeting of Bourke Shire Council will be held on Monday 27th August 2018 commencing at 9.00am at Louth. At the February 2018 meeting of Council it was resolved to take at least one Council meeting per year to one of the villages. The first meeting to be held in Louth is an ideal way of demonstrating just how Council works and provides an insight into the workings of Government at a grass roots level.

A Public Forum will be held at 10.00am. Whilst not essential, people wishing to speak at the public forum are encouraged to contact Kai Howard-Oakman, so that if necessary, background information may be researched on the issue on which they wish to speak.

Items for possible inclusion in the business paper should be with Council no later than Friday 17th August 2018.

I would encourage all residents to try and keep the nature strips adjacent to their property neat and tidy as it certainly enhances the appearance of the town and it is said that "first impressions count".

Many visitors to town comment and are impressed by the green parks and cleanliness of the streets and anything that can be done to provide an ongoing improvement to that image is welcomed.

Council has issued its rates notice for the 2018/2019 rating year and would like to make residents aware of the following.

- Notices were issued mid-July
- To improve efficiency Council for the first time used an external mailing house for printing and posting

- Council is now able to provide an email copy of rates notices. A flyer detailing this was included with the annual notice. Please return the bottom section of your rate notice with your email address to Council if you would like to take advantage of the new service. You can also email bourkeshire@bourke.nsw.gov.au with your email details, please attention the email to the Revenue Officer.
- Due dates will be as follows:-

Instalment	Due Date
Instalment 1	31/08/2018
Instalment 2	30/11/2018
Instalment 3	28/02/2019
Instalment 4	31/05/2019

- It is Council's policy to send overdue notices approximately 14 days after the due date.
- It is Council's policy to then refer the matter to an external debt collection agency if the overdue amounts remain unpaid and no contact has been made regarding the establishment of suitable arrangements for payment including a payment plan. Legal action may follow without further notice. The cost of legal action is borne by the ratepayer so it is important to keep in contact with Council.
- Legal action is only instituted as a last resort.
- Please contact Council if you are having difficulty paying rates on time.

Fran Carter is the new Manager of Tourism and Events at Council. Fran is no stranger to this role, in a previous life Fran was the Manager of Tourism and Economic Development at Brewarrina Shire Council.

Fran's first day with Bourke Shire was Wednesday, 25th July 2018. Fran has settled in well and as time allows she will be out and about to meet stakeholders within the local tourism sector. Last week Fran attended the Kidman Way meeting held in Hillston. This meeting was to reactivate the Kidman Way Committee with a number of previous members having moved on.

The upgrade and beautification of the main street has started well, utilising local trades, with additional teams to be added in the near future.

Garden beds have been constructed at the corner of Oxley and Sturt Streets, with the plan to move over to the newsagent side of the street during the next week.

In the coming weeks Oxley Street between Richard and Sturt Street will become one-way. The community will be advised once the final date is confirmed by advertising on the local radio stations and in the Western Herald. Once the date is set it is proposed to close the section to the public on the Saturday at lunch time reopening once all changes have been implemented and signage installed.

Please make sure that you look out and listen for public announcements in the Western Herald, on 2WEB and 2CUZ FM for changes and dates when this will be taking place.

The library has received funding from the State Library of NSW under the Infrastructure Grants program to install RFID (Radio-Frequency Identification) technology. The hardware has now been installed, with new security gates and a self-loan station in place.

Library staff are currently tagging every item in the library with new RFID tags. Once this is completed, patrons will be able to check out their own items at the self-loans station. It will also allow staff to keep track of stock more efficiently and effectively. A stocktake unit will also be arriving soon, and this will make the stocktake process much faster. We are aiming to have the tagging completed within one (1) month, to get the system up and running as quickly as possible.

If anyone has any questions or would like to see our new technology, call in to the library and staff will be happy to help you.

The Far West Algal Coordinating Committee released their latest report last Friday, with the following areas within or adjacent to Bourke Shire subject to an alert. There are no red algae alerts in the Far-West.

River	Locaction	Alert
Darling (mid-section)	Louth to Trevallyn	Amber Alert
Bogan River	Gongolgon	Amber Alert
Barwon River	Brewarrina	Green Alert

An explanation of what the respective alerts mean is on the Water NSW Website www.watarnsw.com.au/water-quality/algae

Stock and domestic water users in Amber Alert areas should be on the lookout for surface scums and consider alternate water sources if available.

Quote of the week!

'There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full'.

Henry Kissinger

Leonie Brown
Acting General Manager