



# “From the GM’s Desk”

## 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018

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Subject to all planned works going according to schedule the proposed introduction of one way traffic for Oxley Street between Richard and Sturt Streets will become a reality over the coming weekend, being the 1st and 2nd September 2018.

The road changes and erection of signage will commence around 12.30pm on Saturday and will provide some disruption to traffic flow, however, it is hoped that this can be minimised. Oxley Street between Richard Street and Sturt Street will closed to vehicular traffic from approximately 12.45pm until the traffic signage alteration is completed.

For this weekend businesses that are usually open on a Saturday after 12.30pm and/or on a Sunday will open as normal with customers encouraged to utilise parking in adjacent streets and walk the short distance to those businesses.

Residents are asked to be mindful of the change which will see all traffic enter from the Richard Street end of Oxley Street and exit from the Sturt Street end.

The revitalisation of the Commercial District of Bourke (CBD) is being undertaken primarily with funding which has been provided by the Murray Darling Diversification Fund to assist those communities adversely impacted by the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

Planning for the revitalisation works has been in process for a number of months.

The one way option which has been adopted provides the opportunity for the beautification works to be undertaken with minimum disruption.

Work is progressing well and is being staged to minimise any disruption to businesses during the construction phase.

Once completed the works will result in a significant beautification of the CBD and will provide much needed shade and seating.

The project focuses on making the CBD a functional inviting and welcoming environment for locals and visitors alike.

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In the winter edition of their magazine “United” the United Services Union (USU) featured an article on Bourke Shire’s Hosting of a staff Health and Well Being Day which was held earlier in the year. The USU were invited to attend and contribute to the day and had a representative in attendance.

The Health and Wellbeing day featured Health checks including blood pressure check, screening sugar levels, weight and height checks. There were a number of other presentations on the day including skin cancer awareness, the identification and treatment of sun spots and potential

melanomas. Mental Health awareness also featured strongly and all employees were able to participate in a survey to gauge how employees felt at work both physically and mentally. As part of the mental health awareness there was a presentation by professional actors which was well received and was able to get a strong message across to all attendees.

The USU's summation of the day as published in the magazine was as follows *"The Union as with previous events, was pleased with the way things went all day and saw this as a positive for our members, as we, and Council are concerned for everyone's general and mental health. Hopefully by publishing this article, you become aware of this great initiative by Bourke Shire Council and can approach your employer to do something similar"*.

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The Enngonia Races will be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and if the previous year's racing can be used as a guide it will be an excellent day out, so mark it in your diary.

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A reminder that the first instalment for the 2018/2019 rates are due on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

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The Western Region "All of Emergency Services Expo " was held in Bourke last Thursday was a huge success with an excellent response by all emergency services who went to a great deal of effort to arrange their displays and demonstrations. There were attendees from all Bourke Schools as well as students from Brewarrina and Cobar. The Expo was coordinated by Fire & Rescue NSW Community Safety Coordinator, Susan Gibbs-Kelly and she is to be congratulated on bringing it all together.

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Residents and businesses are reminded that unless they are paying for an additional bin(s) that they should only be putting the one bin out for collection. Staff will be reviewing the number of bins being collected and those who are putting out more bins than they have paid for will be billed accordingly.

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Councillors Auditors will be in Bourke from the 11<sup>th</sup> September for four (4) days to conduct the Audit of the 2017/2018 Financial Reports. The Financial Reports need to be completed and audited by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018. The Bourke Shire Finance team have a little extra work to do this year as Council changed computer systems mid-way through the year. Some of the information from the two (2) systems needed to be aggregated for reporting services, this has proved time consuming.

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The Auditor function for all Local Government Councils in NSW had until the last 12 months been undertaken by auditors appointed by the individual Councils following an open tender process.

Since the changes to the Local Government Act as part of the Local Government Reform Process the audits are now being undertaken under the auspice of the New South Wales Auditor General's Office.

The Auditor General in turn appointed suitably qualified and experienced auditors to undertake the work on their behalf and in Bourke's case our existing Auditors, Hills Spencer were appointed for the

2017/2018 period and it was the intention of the Auditor General to appoint auditors on a longer term basis.

The Auditor General is currently calling tenders for the audit of all Councils in this area and a number of Councils have been combined for the undertaking of this tender process. The outcome of that tender process is expected to be known shortly.

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I was looking at a road safety website and noted that since 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018, children under 16 years of age are allowed to ride on a footpath (increased from children under 12 years of age). Allowing children under the age of 16 on the footpath will help keep them safe until they have the skills, decision making and knowledge of the rules to ride safely on the road.

New South Wales was one of only two (2) states in Australia that required children over the age of 12 to ride on the road. The change was apparently to allow children to feel safer on their bikes and encourage physical exercise by riding to school.

An adult rider who is supervising a bicycle rider under 16 may also ride with the young rider on the footpath. Children aged 16 or 17 can ride on the footpath, when accompanied by a child under 16 and a supervising adult.

When riding on a footpath, riders must keep left and give way to pedestrians.

For more information on how to stay safe when riding on the footpath, you can visit the website <http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/bicycle-riders/laws.html> and look at the Safe Riding Tips.

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New South Wales Public Libraries are funded primarily by Local Government with Councils providing approximately 92% of the funding and the State Government 8% whereas in Victoria the funding from the State Government is 18% of the total expenditure and in Queensland it is 12%.

A campaign called "renew our Libraries" was set up to push the call for additional funding and those involved welcome the announcement by the Minister for Arts in New South Wales the Hon. Don Harwin that \$60 million dollars would be committed to public Libraries.

Speaking in Wagga Wagga on Friday, Minister Harwin said this is a landmark occasion for NSW public libraries, ensuring they remain at the heart of every community.

"All Councils will receive an increase in annual library subsidy funding between 40 to 50 per cent by 2022-23. This significant investment demonstrates that our Government supports the hundreds of libraries across the state," Minister Harwin said.

"The funding will be particularly significant in areas such as Wagga, where populations are growing and library needs are evolving," he said.

"The funding will also support the roll out of more Service NSW self-serve kiosks at public libraries, which will allow everyone to access key government services."

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Under the new investment, the per capita subsidy for public libraries will increase from \$1.85 per capita to \$2.85 per capita – the first time it has been increased in over twenty years.

The NSW Public Libraries Association President Councillor Dallas Tout of Wagga welcomed the commitment but would be seeking further information on exactly how and over what period of time the funding boost will be rolled out. The President of Local Government New South Wales Councillor Linda Scott also welcomed the announcement saying the decision to provide better funding to our public libraries across NSW was a positive first step in the right direction.

Bourke Shire Council has been supportive of the call for additional funds to be made available for Public Libraries across the state.

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A campaign is underway across the State as Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services and the Emergency Service agencies prepare NSW motorists for the introduction of a new road rule aimed at protecting first responders and motorists at the roadside.

The campaign aims to raise awareness about the new road rule that will require motorists across NSW to slow down to 40km/h when passing stationary emergency vehicles displaying blue or red flashing lights.

The rule begins on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 and will be trialled for 12 months. It is designed to keep everyone safe during a roadside incident, providing protection for police, firefighters, ambulance officers, State Emergency Service and rescue volunteers who perform often difficult and dangerous tasks to help others.

Key points about the rule:-

- It will apply to vehicles travelling in both directions, unless the road is divided by a median strip.
- It will require motorists to give way to any person on foot in the immediate area of the emergency vehicle.
- Drivers should not increase their speed until they are a safe distance past the emergency vehicle.
- Motorists who fail to comply with the rule will face a \$448 fine and three demerit points.

Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services will monitor the safety and traffic impacts of the rule in consultation with NSW Police, emergency service organisations and other stakeholders.

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The Ordinary Council Meeting of Bourke Shire Council for the Month of August was held at Louth and it provided the opportunity for residents of the village to attend a Council meeting and also provided the opportunity for residents to attend the public Forum and raise any concerns that may have in relation to the operation of Council and the services provided. A number of people took the opportunity to attend and address Council and staff will work on issues raised.

It was the first time that those who are on Council could remember a meeting being held in one of the villages and it was very successful

A big thankyou to Kim Chandler who was up early to open up the Tennis Shed for us and assisted staff in setting the room up for the meeting.

Inspector Andrew Hurst and Sergeant Gavin Smith the Operations Supervisor of the Central North Police Command attended the meeting and gave Council an update on policing matters throughout the shire.

During the course of their address it was obvious that they were generally pleased with the behaviour of those people who attended the Louth Races and it was obvious that there was a close relationship between the Louth Race Committee and the Louth Community and the Police. This relationship and the level of cooperation that was demonstrated between them was instrumental in the smooth running of the races and the period either side of the day of the races with many people coming to the village well before the races and staying on afterwards.

There was a huge crowd at the races with the population of the village increasing by an estimated 130% fold on race day.

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At the meeting Council endorsed the creation of a Renshaw Oval Users Advisory Committee and Councillor Bob Stutsel will join with Mayor Barry Hollman as Council representatives on that committee. They will be joined by two (2) representatives of each of the following organisations:-

- Back O' Bourke Race Club
- Bourke Gun Club
- Bourke Show
- Bourke Pony Club

A Draft Charter for the committee has been developed and it is anticipated that the first meeting will be held in early September.

The Draft Charter details roles and responsibilities of the proposed Committee together with a number of administrative matters.

The four (4) clubs/organisations as detailed above will be invited to nominate their delegates to attend.

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Quote of the week!

*"There is only one way to avoid criticism: Do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing".*

*Elbert Hubbard*

Ross Earl  
General Manager