



# “FROM THE GM’S DESK”

## 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2019



The Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP and Deputy Premier, the Hon John Barilaro, MP paid a visit to Bourke last Friday and it was as far as can be determined the first time that both a Premier and Deputy Premier of NSW had been in Bourke at the same time.

During the visit to Bourke they met with Council and other members of the community to obtain a better understanding of the impact of the drought and water issues generally. Both the Premier and Deputy Premier were very keen to see what has been done to provide water security for the town of Bourke with the impending loss of access to water from the river supply.

Included in the itinerary; whilst the party were in town was a visit to Maranguka Community Hub and the Justice Reinvestment Programme.

This visit was followed by a roundtable with members of Council, the grazing fraternity and representatives of local irrigators on water and drought issues and the time was also taken to discuss a number of other issues with a particular focus on health and the importance to have good access to health facilities in our isolated community.

Mayor Barry Hollman and Council staff also accompanied the visitors for an inspection of the weir, boat ramp, Walkden’s Bore Project and the sad sight of the PV Jandra sitting on a sea of mud.

Both the Premier and Deputy Premier were very approachable and showed a very genuine concern for the town of Bourke and the surrounding area and the problems cause by a lack of flow in the river.

A visit such as this requires a great deal of coordination, Mayor Hollman expressed his personal appreciation and the appreciation more generally of the broader Bourke community for the visit.

The Back O’ Bourke Conference Centre proved to be an outstanding venue for the meeting and the catering provided and presentation of the area generally, was excellent.

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Level Five (5) water restrictions are now in place for Bourke whilst in North Bourke the supply of raw water is unable to be continued due to the very low levels in the weir pool that now remains available to service this area.

The query has been raised regarding the availability of water for fire-fighting purposes and I can advise that the Rural Fire Service has a 40,000 litre water tanker on standby at their complex at the Airport which can be mobilised very quickly and Council staff have undertaken work that will

allow filtered water to be transferred to the raw water network should it be required. Council staff members are on call to undertake the transfer as quickly as possible.

While level 5 water restrictions are in place there is to be no use of hoses or sprinkler systems and watering should be limited to permanent plantings only and undertaken only by the use of buckets.

Washing of cars is prohibited except as required by law e.g. clean windscreens, number plates and lights.

There are exemptions for a number of areas including schools, some ovals, bowling greens and the hospital.

Full details of the level five (5) restrictions and exemptions are available of Council's website [www.bourke.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bourke.nsw.gov.au) or can be obtained from Councils offices.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO BOTH FILTERED AND RAW WATER SUPPLIES.

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There has been more good rain in some parts of Queensland and it is hoped that this will lead to additional water coming into the Barwon Darling system; however, this is yet to be accurately determined.

If some of the water does make its way into the system it will provide a much wetter river bed for the recently announced environmental flow to traverse.

Those residents below Bourke in the Louth and Tilpa areas will be hoping the recent rain also supplements that already received and in the upper reaches of the Warrego. If this happens in the Warrego will hopefully find its way into the Darling above Louth and would be an excellent follow up on the recent local falls.

I had the opportunity to have a look at the Warrego River whilst at Enngonia for the ANZAC Day Service and it is currently very high at Enngonia and has provided additional water to the landowners in that area on top on the recent rainfall.

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Brewarrina Shire Council, in a very kind and unselfish gesture have allowed a little of the flow coming into their weir pool to move further downstream wetting the river bed and greatly increasing the chances of any further flows into the upper reaches of the system making it to Bourke and beyond.

With the recent rain a great portion of the river is reasonably wet and the earlier predictions as to how far the propose environment flow will reach will hopefully be revised.

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The rainfall received last week was extremely welcome, however, did result in a number of road closures and I thank those who elected not to travel on the closed roads this assists in preserving and protecting the road surface.

Unfortunately there were also a number of people who failed to adhere to the closures and there was resultant damage to the roads in a number of areas across the shire.

The moisture in the soil will now allow maintenance grading to take place once some of the areas suffering from washouts and vehicle damage are able to be repaired.

I fail to understand why some people think that driving unnecessarily on wet road seems like good thing to do and have no regard to the cost of the repair to the damage they cause coupled with the inconvenience to the regular road users who have to put up with a damaged the surface until the Council has the opportunity and funding available to undertake the repairs.

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It was pleasing to see the very positive response by visitors and locals alike to the Easter Weekend activities in Bourke which has received excellent reviews.

I think that the accolades given to those who undertook the coordination of the weekend were very much deserved and I would add my personal thanks to all those involved.

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The ANZAC Day Commemorative Services were held across Shire.

In Bourke the Dawn Service was again very well attended by people of all ages and this service always seems to have a very solemn atmosphere as the crowd assembles in the darkness and the sound of the bagpipes and the bugle resonate in the quiet of the morning.

The Bourke Bowling Club continued with their tradition of suppling those who attended the Dawn Service with a cooked breakfast and over 100 people took the opportunity to come together for the breakfast. It is very generous gesture by the club and the volunteers led by the President Mark O'Shannessy and other Board members who were up early to do the cooking and other preparation.

Upwards of 350 people attend the main Service in Central Park including a large representation of school children both from the local schools and those who were home from boarding school. Isaac Ford a local boy who is now attending Riverview College in Sydney provided the Occasional Address and his involvement together coupled with all other school children provides an assurance that the importance of ANZAC Day will remain strong within our community.

Attendance at the Louth Service was impacted slightly by the very welcome rain that fell earlier in the week causing road closures, however was still well attended

In Enngonia the rain also had an impact on road conditions and thus the ability of some people to attend but there was still a very good attendance for such a small village and included a number of visitors.

The spirit of ANZAC, with its qualities of courage and mateship, continues to have meaning and relevance for our sense of national identity and it is important that these qualities continue to be recognised.

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Bourke Shire Council's Draft Operational Plan (Budget) for 2018/2019 is currently on display with submissions in relation to the Operational Plan able to be lodged any time during the display period which concludes on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Council will consider the Draft Operational Plan for 2019/2020 and any submissions received in respect of the Plan at its Ordinary meeting of Council to be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2019 prior to its adoption at that meeting.

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Council has secured information pamphlets relating to water saving initiatives that can be introduced to help households reduce water consumption and eliminate waste. Whilst the publications are of particular benefit in these drought conditions, they are also a useful reference and source of information at any time.

Examples of waste of water include:-

- Fix dripping taps - at a rate of 1 drip per second it wastes over 12,000 litres per year
  - Fix leaking toilets - a slow barely visible leak can waste over 4,000 litres per year while a visible constant leak can waste over 96,000 litres per year.
  - Uncovered pools can lose up to 55,000 litres of water annually, through evaporation, which is a big deal. Using a solar pool cover can help you to stop 97% of evaporation
  - Look at the water rating of washing machines when you are next looking to buy another washing machine, look for a machine that have a four or more WELS star rating (The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Scheme).
  - Ensure that dishwashers are full prior to starting the cycle.
  - A 10 minute shower can use up to 90 litres of water! Try cutting a minute off your shower. Saving hot water not only saves water but energy and money too.
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The filtered water supply in Bourke, continues to be a combination of both bore and river water, however, as previously foreshadowed there is a strong possibility that Bourke will shortly be reliant on bore water for its filtered water supply for domestic and commercial purposes.

While there will still be water in the weir pool there is some difficulties for the pumps to operate when the water is at such a low level.

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Residents are asked to ensure that their garbage bins are in good condition complete with lids so that they are not subject to attack by animals and birds which often results in rubbish left strewn over the footpath and someone with the not so pleasant task of cleaning it up. Equally important is to ensure that the lid on the bin is able to be closed so as to stop a similar occurrence.

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Bourke Shire Council wishes to remind Bourke residents and business owners of the collection times for Domestic and Trade Waste Collection.

**Domestic garbage** collection times are Monday – Friday between the hours of **3:00am – 11:00am ONLY**

**Trade Waste** garbage collections times are - Tuesdays and Fridays between the hours of **3am -11:00 am ONLY**

Bins are to be put out for collection the **NIGHT BEFORE** your scheduled bin collection day, to avoid your bin being missed.

Additionally, both residents and businesses are reminded that they should only be putting out the number of bins which have been paid for.

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Work continues on the some of the projects to be undertaken from the Building Stronger Country Communities Fund with the half -court Basketball/Netball court being constructed in the North East Corner of Central Park.

The Building Stronger Country Communities fund has enable Council to deliver a number of improvements to the facilities in Bourke and shire villages which would have otherwise not be able to be achieved. The toilet block for Central Park is not too far off being constructed and will be a welcome addition to this area with usage of the skate park, playground and exercise equipment increasing all the time.

The area is also a well patronised by the travelling public.

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There is an Extraordinary Meeting of The Far West Joint Organisation to be held on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May and the meeting will take place using teleconferencing facilities. Joint Organisation of Councils are able to use this method of holding meetings, whilst with at normal Council meetings all attendees required to be physically present the scheduled meeting venue.

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Council has been asked to consider a proposal to introduce 40kph speed limit Oxley Street between Richards and Sturt Streets to ensure an increased level of safety for pedestrians in the area.

The redevelopment of the precinct is in part based on increased pedestrian activity and the improved amenity of the area and the proposed reduction of the speed limit consistent with that objective.

Council invites comment from residents in relation to the proposal change to the speed limit. Submissions in relation to the proposed change to the speed limit in Oxley Street between Richard and Sturt Street can be made by 9.00am Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and should be addressed to the General Manger Bourke Shire Council PO Box 21 Bourke 2840

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*Quote of the week!*

*Believe in yourself. You are braver than you think, more talented than you know, and capable of more than you imagine.*

*Roy T. Bennett*

*Ross Earl*  
General Manager