



“FROM THE GM’S DESK”

16TH MAY 2019



The recent rainfall has allowed grading to be undertaken on some of the Regional Roads within the shire with the road to Hungerford, Louth and Wanaaring all receiving a maintenance grade.

The rain has also seen a number of the water sources in the western section of the shire replenished.

Work has recommenced on the Wanaaring Road with work on the Wongareena Plain Section funded by the Regional Road Repair Program being undertaken. The Regional Road Repair Program is funded by the jointly by the Roads and Maritime Services and Bourke Shire Council.

This part of the project will cost \$800,000.00

Once this section has been completed the Council staff will continue with that portion of the Wongareena Plain area to be funded from the Fixing Country Roads Programme grant of \$11,100,000.00.

Work on the Wanaaring Road is coming along very nicely and Council will be continuing its efforts to secure funding to try and see the entire length of road sealed.

A little over twelve (12) months ago this would have seemed like a dream, but with the funding received to date and a degree of optimism that further funding could become available it has suddenly become something that may well be achieved in the short term.

With the success of the establishment of a permanent camp for our road construction workforce at Yandaroo, Council is looking to establish a similar camp at Rainbar and has purchased two (2) transportable buildings with each one of which containing three (3) bedrooms complete with an ensuite. Arrangements are being made for portable kitchen facilities to complement the accommodation.

Other facilities will be installed to cater for contractors.

It is important that the facilities are maintained at an acceptable standard. The use of permanent camps is designed to negate the need for the use of caravans. The camps will continue to be established at strategic locations within the shire which will minimise travel to jobs.

As of Tuesday, 14th May 2019, the Darling River at Bourke will have stopped flowing over the weir at Bourke for 271 days, far exceeding the previous record created in 2006 of 200 days.

The period of no flow across the weir will reach 273 days or 39 weeks this Thursday 16th May 2019.

This is one record that we don't want to see broken!

A reminder that Level Five (5) Water Restrictions are in place in Bourke and North Bourke and will remain in place until we get a substantive improvement in the level of water in the weir pool.

Council will consider the adoption of Council's the Draft Operational Plan (Budget) for 2019/2020 at its Ordinary meeting of Council to be held on the 27th May 2019. Prior to its adoption Council must consider any submissions received in respect of the Operational Plan.

Council has been asked to consider a proposal to introduce 40kph speed limit Oxley Street between Richard 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 with the proposed reduction of the speed limit consistent with that objective.

Council invites comment from residents in relation to the proposed 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 20th May 2019 and should be addressed to the General Manager, Bourke Shire Council, PO Box 21 Bourke 2840.

A meeting of the Bourke Shire Traffic Committee will be held on Tuesday, 21st May 2019, amongst the items to be discussed will be the proposed speed limit in Oxley Street. The Traffic Committee comprises representatives of the Local Police, Roads and Maritime Services, a representative of the Local Member and Representatives of Bourke Shire Council.

The Committee makes recommendations to Council on matters relating to speed limits, parking areas, installations of pedestrian crossings etc.

All decisions made by the Committee must have the input from the Police and Roads and Maritime Services and such they form a vital part of the committee.

The new Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils, which sets minimum standards for Councillors, administrators, staff and Council Committee Members in NSW, comes into force from June.

It affects more than 45,000 staff and nearly 1,300 Councillors at 128 councils across NSW and must be adopted, without 'dilution', by June 14 2019.

Bourke Shire Council has adopted the new Code of Conduct earlier this year.

Councillors and staff will also no longer be able to accept gifts worth more than \$50 and will have to disclose if they are a developer or a close associate of one.

The new code, which is designed to boost confidence in local government, tightens rules on gifts and benefits, putting a 12-month \$50 cap on gifts including invitations to sporting events, alcohol, chocolates, flowers, prizes and awards.

The code also bans harassment, discrimination and bullying including exclusion from work related events, unreasonable work expectations, initiation ceremonies and displaying offensive material.

Following a series of meetings, the route for this year's Tour de OROC has been finally determined and the group of cyclists will be in Bourke for an overnight stay on the 9th October 2019.

There will be a maximum of 30 cyclists who will form the peloton, they will be accompanied by a support crew of up to ten (10) people in cars, to transport food and equipment and also provide awareness to other road users.

The coordination of the event takes a considerable amount of effort and resources and all is undertaken on a voluntary basis.

Riders and the support crew give a large commitment of time not only for the ride itself but also training and obtaining sponsorship.

All funds raised will go to support Macquarie Homestay providing accommodation for those persons from the Orana Region and beyond who need to travel and stay in Dubbo for Medical treatment.

Bourke Shire Council has developed a DRAFT CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE in accordance with section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993

The Draft Code of Meeting Practice for Bourke Shire Council was on public exhibition from 28th March 2019 to the 26th April 2019 and submissions were invited to be lodged by 10th May 2019.

Council will again consider the Draft Code and any submissions received at its meeting scheduled for 27th May 2019 and once adopted it will become effective as at the next meeting in June.

Work is currently on the way to install a storm water drain from the Bourke Public Library at the corner of Glen and Mitchell Streets.

There has been an ongoing issue relating to drainage in this area or some time causing difficulties in accessing the library particularly after heavy rain. The water is now being diverted into the Richard Street stormwater drain, via an underground pipe.

The firm undertaking the underground boring and Council staff hope to have the work finished by the 20th May 2019.

There may be some short delays for traffic in the area and motorists are asked to be patient.

The foot valve which forms part of the pumping system from the river into the Water Treatment Plant has been damaged during the drought conditions and the opportunity has been taken with the low river to have both the pivot arm and foot valve upgraded.

The pivot arm allows the pipe to move up and down with the river level and has reached a point where it is best to replace it whilst the other work was taking place.

There may be some need to ask residents to further restrict usage whilst these works are undertaken but the work is scheduled so that it caused minimum disruption.

Representatives from the Bushtracker Owner's Group were in Bourke last week to discuss with Council staff. Plans for their Annual Muster which will be held in Bourke during September this year. Bushtracker is the name of a particular type of caravan.

Bourke Shire put in a submission to host the muster and was successful in their bid to host the event which will see in excess of 80 of the Caravans and their owners converging on Bourke for up to ten (10) days and it should result in quite an economic boost for the town.

The group hold an Annual Muster around Australia each year with the last muster held at Streaky Bay in South Australia.

While in Bourke the group have a number of activities planned and the second last day of the Muster will see them travel up to Enngonia for the Races which are being held on the 21st September 2019.

All Councils in New South Wales have been notified that they will be faced with an increase in the Emergency Services Levy.

In a press release on the proposed increase to the Emergency Services Levy payable by Councils, Mayor of Bourke Shire Council, Councillor Barry Hollman stressed that Bourke Shire Council is very supportive of initiatives to assist those who protect our community and often risk their lives in doing so, but was critical of the timing of the announcement of the increase.

However, he noted that Councils had only this week received advice of the increase and the majority of Councils, including Bourke, would have already prepared their Operational Plans (Budget) for 2019/2020 and these were in the process of being advertised and ready for finalisation.

The increase to Bourke Shire Council is approximately \$31,500.00 or an increase of 21.5% over last year's contribution and while it is not a significant amount compared to Council's overall budget, it accounts for the bulk of the money able to be raised by Council through the allowable General rate increase of 2.7%.

The increase is on the back of the 27.5% increase in the Rural Fire Service portion of Council's contribution in 2016/2017, which was due to a change to the funding formula. That increase equated to 80% of the amount able to be raised through the General Rate increase of 1.8% applicable at the time.

Council believes that consideration of any increases to be applied to Local Government by the State Government should be undertaken only having had regard to the allowable rate pegging percentage.

Council supports the concept of looking after those who put their lives at risk for the benefit of the community and often suffered injuries or disease as a result but queried the timing of the announcement and the fact that it did not allow Councils the opportunity to factor the increase into their budgets despite the legislation being passed in November 2018.

This Saturday sees the Federal Election which has captured a lot of publicity over the past few weeks and is looking likely to be a very close contest. A number of candidates have been dis-endorsed for varying reasons, which is not without precedent but I don't recall such high numbers previously. It will be interesting if any of these dis-endorsed get elected and the subsequent reaction of the parties who dis-endorsed them.

In Bourke voting on Saturday, 18th May 2019 is at the Bourke Public School, whilst for those who are looking to Pre-Poll can do so at the Bourke PCYC on Wednesday, 15th, Thursday, 16th and Friday, 17th May:-

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS TAKEN FROM THE AEC WEBSITE
For details on voting in other centres you should go to the following website

<https://www.aec.gov.au/election/voting.htm#voting>

The next Ordinary Meeting of Bourke Shire Council is scheduled for Monday, 27th May 2019 and will commence at 9.00am.

Despite the introduction of Level Five (5) restrictions the raw water consumption at North Bourke is still high with an average of nearly 150,000 litres being used per day.

Given that usage should be confined to buckets this equates to 15,000 buckets per day assuming a 10 litre bucket and this is despite the ground being still wet from the rain.

It takes about 30 seconds to fill a bucket so it would take around one hundred and twenty five hours (125) continuous filling to fill that number of buckets.

Staff members have investigated the possibility of significant leaks or other abnormality but it would appear that the consumption figure is correct and it seems a very high amount and obviously it is unlikely that all consumption hasn't been used by the filling of buckets.

Had it not been for the rain the situation would be still be dire and there seems to be a lack of understanding of the situation by some people.

The rollout of rural addressing has begun in the Bourke Shire. The installation of numbered posts is being carried out by four (4) local contractors.

Rural addressing is a distance based on a measurement system that allocates each rural property a unique address.

The rural address number is assigned in a sequence based on the distance of the access of the property from the start of a road, with odd numbers assigned on the left and the even numbers on the right from the start of the road.

This number will make it easier for any of the Emergency Services to identify the property. These numbers replace Lot numbers or any other numbering arrangement that has been used in the past. However the name of the property can still be used in conjunction with the rural address number.

We are expecting the initial work to be completed over the coming weeks, and to be finalised within the next few months.

Dignity Water brought up thirty pallets of water for distribution to Bourke Residents over the weekend.

They intended to stay for two (2) days but the water was distributed in just over half a day.

As well as been distributed locally, Lanz Priestley and his team left water at Byrock, Coolabah and Girilambone.

Bourke Shire Council agreed to take some water to both Enngonia and Barringun and that was delivered on Monday and will distribute water to Wanaaring and Fords Bridge over the course of the next week.

It was a generous gesture by Dignity Water who said that they would be back if they saw the need.

Quote of the week!

"Lighten up, just enjoy life, smile more, laugh more, and don't get so worked up about things".

Kenneth Branagh

Ross Earl
General Manager