



“From the GM’s Desk”

21st November 2019



As I write this column, Council Staff are busy preparing for the visit to Bourke next Sunday and Monday (24th and 25th November 2019) of the NSW Premier, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, the Deputy Premier, the Hon. John Barilaro, and the NSW Cabinet, which comprises all NSW Ministers. The purpose of the visit is allow the Cabinet to hear directly from the community about important issues and priorities.

On Monday, 25th November 2019 at 10.00am, community members who previously lodged an expression of interest, may meet directly with Cabinet Ministers at the Full Gospel Fellowship Church in Bourke. Registrations for these meetings have now closed.

From 11.00am till 12.00pm on Monday, a Community Morning Tea will be held at the Fellowship Church. Again it is necessary to register. Meeting registration details are available at www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/communitycabinet/morningtea. Registration close on Thursday, 21st November 2019.

The visit to Bourke by the Premier and her entire Cabinet is an historic event for Bourke and provides an excellent opportunity for the community to connect with the State’s decision makers. I encourage residents to get involved.

The other exciting event on Monday 25 November 2019, is the arrival into Bourke of the initial flight from Dubbo by AirLink Airlines under the Far North West Joint Organisation Air Services Project. The initial flight will arrive at 9.50am and then depart for Dubbo at 3.00pm later that day. The NSW Government provided considerable funding to the Joint Organisation as a subsidy for the flights, which last flew some 12 years ago. Full details of the flights are available at AirLinks website: <https://airlinkairlines.com.au/flight-schedules/>

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) hosted its annual Roads Congress earlier this week at Hahndorf in the Adelaide Hills, South Australia. Bourke Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman and Councillor Victor Bartley joined with Local Government delegates from across the nation at this important conference. Roads are generally the biggest asset base of local Councils and decisions emanating from these Road Congresses direct the Policy position of the Association in advocating to Government. As a result of decisions at last year’s conference, ALGA’s advocacy achieved significant outcomes throughout the 2019 budget and federal election cycle.

Among these were a commitment in the Federal Budget for a 20% increase to base funding for the Roads to Recovery Program to \$500m per annum from 1 July 2019. This funding provided to Local Government by the Commonwealth is so important.

Whilst talking of roads, Council is confident that all unsealed roads will be inspected and attended to by the end of this week. While the long-overdue rain was beautiful, it has caused a few issues for some Shire roads that were hit harder than others. Council is aware of these roads and will attending to them as soon as it is safe to do so.

Last week Council received confirmation from the Roads and Martine Service (RMS) of successful funding from the NSW Government under the Regional Road Repair Program. This level of funding is up to a maximum upper limit of \$400,000.00 per council, Council will contribute matching 50% funding of \$400,000.00 from its Regional Road Block Grant, and a further \$300,000.00 from its Roads to Recovery (R2R) program.

This will be used to construct 6.93 km of initial seal on MR 404 Bourke to Fords Bridge. This sand hill section of road is renowned for its rough ride and continued complaints from residents in the Fords Bridge and Hungerford area. The project is to be completed by 30th May 2020.

On the 6th November 2019, the Government announced \$138.9 million additional Roads to Recovery funding in the 2020 calendar year for the 128 Local Government Areas eligible for the Drought Communities Programme Extension.

Bourke Shire Council received an additional \$1,199,903 in total for 2019/2020 and 2020/ 2021 financial years. The additional funding will be split over the two years allowing an additional amount of \$599,952.00 on top of our \$1,199,903.00 already allocated for the 2019/2020 budget. The total allocation for our current R2R budget will increase to \$1,799,855.00 for 2019/2020.

This additional funding is appreciated by the Council and road users within the Shire and thank both the State and Federal Governments for these additional funds.

I inspected the weir on Monday afternoon and at that stage flows over the weir had essentially stopped. As widely reported, the rain event on 4 November 2019 saw 94mm fall on Bourke and surrounds and resulted in water flowing over the weir for the first time in 483 days. Two weeks later the water has stopped flowing, however, it is understood that downstream the water from the Darling and Warrego rivers has flowed to the Tilpa Weir.

Whilst water restrictions in Bourke have been relaxed to Level 1, we all play a part in being water wise to ensure water is not wasted.

Due to the planned power outage happening on Sunday, 24th November 2019, the Bourke Swimming Pool Complex will be closed until 2.00pm. Public Swimming pools have guidelines that need to be adhered to with water filtration and patronage use, and due to the outage the pool will not be able to operate its filtration plant and comply with these guidelines. The pool will remain closed after the power is reinstalled to allow for testing and any chemical dosing that may need to take place to meet NSW Public Health guidelines, once the pool water meets these guidelines the pool will reopen to the public. Council apologise for any inconvenience caused by this closure.

Bourke Shire Council this year will host "Christmas in the Park" in Central Park scheduled for the 6th December from 6pm. This free event will transform Central Park into a Christmas wonderland for all the kids with activities abound. Light displays and a Christmas tree, complemented by Santa Claus, giant slippery slide and food and beverage outlets. Santa Claus and the Mayor will officially switch on Bourke's Christmas lights display which will initiate the Christmas light judging.

Council will also celebrate the Christmas spirit this year with the Christmas Lights competition. Residents are encouraged to decorate their home or nominate their neighbour's/ friend's property with plenty of prizes to be won. For more information contact the Back O' Bourke Visitor Information & Exhibition Centre by calling 0268721321.

This year's Australia Day festivities will again will be held at the Bourke Swimming Pool to celebrate the things that make our country great: the people, the land, the culture, our diversity, our sense of a fair go, our lifestyle and our freedoms. This year's categories include:-

- Citizen of the Year
- Young Citizen of the Year (18 and under)
- Emergency Service Volunteer of the Year
- Shire Village Community Service
- Sportsperson of the Year
- Young Sportsperson (18 and under)

Nominations are now open, details on how to nominate are available on Councils website or by calling into the Council Office at 29 Mitchell Street Bourke.

Ratepayers are reminded that the next rates instalment is due on 30th November 2019 with the water charges also due on that day.

Congratulations to the Bourke Amateur Swimming Club who successfully hosted their inter town swimming carnival on the 9th and 10th November at the Bourke pool with over a 100 kids from far and wide taking part. From all reports the carnival was a great success and the visiting towns who made the trek to Bourke commented that the carnival was extremely well run and loved the hospitality afforded to them by the swimming club and the township of Bourke, with many clubs reporting they have already booked it in for next year and will return with more competitors and families.

Round 1 of Rural Addressing in the Bourke Shire Council has come to completion with a positive outcome. While the majority of rural addresses have been identified with the new orange posts and reflective numbering, there are some gaps in the system.

If you find that you are not the recipient of one of these orange posts somewhere near your main property entrance, or the post has been placed in an incorrect area, please let council know. We are gearing up for another round of installs and would like to make sure that all addresses are correct.

Bourke Shire Council will be holding a **FREE TIP WEEKEND FOR RESIDENTIAL PREMISES** for the disposal of most household items on Saturday, 23rd & Sunday, 24th November 2019 from 9.30am to 5.00pm.

Accepted items include, furniture, whitegoods and household refuse as well as garden waste.

Please note that this is for residential properties ONLY, no commercial or building waste will be accepted free of charge.

There are some items will **NOT** be accepted free of charge and these include. Chemicals, Tyres Batteries, Asbestos and liquid wastes and as detailed above building and commercial waste.

In the lead up to Christmas, I encourage residents to take advantage of the *Tip Fee Free Weekend* and dispose of their unwanted rubbish

Bourke's Parkrun is a free weekly 5km timed run each week at 8.00am. The parkrun is held at the J.B Renshaw Sporting Complex and is open to everyone, it is safe and easy to take part in. I encourage people within the community of every ability to take part you are welcome to walk, run, jog or to push your pram around the course. The parkrun is a dog friendly event, but your dog must be on a short leash.

The parkrun is a great place to meet new people in our community. Every parkrun relies on volunteers and volunteering is a great way to meet new friends.

You can register on line at www.parkrun.com.au/register/

Come along, get healthy and enjoy a family friendly fun event each Saturday. For more information on the Bourke parkrun visit www.parkrun.com.au/bourkeracecourse/

Quote of the Week!

"If I had nine hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first six sharpening my axe".

Abraham Lincoln

Have a good weekend

Leonie Brown
Acting General Manager