



**BOURKE  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**

**“From the Acting General  
Manager’s Desk”  
3 December 2020**

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**PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES:**

The Western NSW Local Health District (WNSWLHD) has announced the awarding of a contract to Ochre Health for the provision of medical services to Bourke and other Western Area Multipurpose Services from 2021.

The WNSWLHD has advised that under the new contract, people in Bourke, Brewarrina, Coonamble, Lightning Ridge and Walgett requiring “urgent care will be seen face to face, any time of the day or night, by a doctor who is either on site, or who is called in.”

The advice further provides that “it is expected that face to face doctors will also be available in the towns on Saturday and Sunday mornings for all those who present to the ED regardless of their triage category. Less urgent patients will be seen by a doctor through our remote access services out of hours.”

These arrangements at the outset appear similar to current service levels available in Bourke and above the minimum service levels as previously included in the tender document for the service contract. If that is the case that is pleasing. Council has accepted an invitation to meet with the Acting Executive Officer of the Health District to meet with him prior to Christmas. It would be hoped from this meeting that clarity can be brought to the table as to the specific service levels for advice to the community.

**CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK:**

Don’t forget Friday night, 4 December “Christmas in the Park” event in Central Park from 6.00pm till 9.00pm. With the Maranguka Community Hub joining with Council to present the event, Santa and his Elves will be in attendance with entertainment and food and drink stalls available. Please note COVID restrictions will apply. For any enquiries contact Maranguka at their office in Mitchell St, Bourke (Phone 0448 498 597) or contact the Back O’ Bourke Information and Exhibition Centre by phoning 6872 1321.

**AUSTRALIA DAY NOMINATIONS:**

Next Monday, 7 December 2020 is the closing date for nominations for the 2021 Bourke Australia Day Awards. As previously advised, details on how to nominate potential winners are available on Council’s website or by calling into the Council Office at 29 Mitchell Street, Bourke. If you don’t nominate that worthy potential recipient, they will never receive that recognition they deserve.

**JOB-READY SKILLS WITH SUMMER SKILLS PROGRAM:**

Summer Skills is an initiative of the new JobTrainer NSW package offering fee-free training and skills support to all 2020 Year 12 school leavers. Participants can take short vocational courses over the summer period, and both short and long vocational courses across 2021.

It does not matter whether the former students intend going on to university or a vocational training organisation, starting work, or taking a gap year, the training courses will help boost the resume and

allow participants to experience some jobs first hand. Join up with a friend or sign up to discover new passions and meet like- minded school leavers across the state.

In Bourke, the course offerings are First Aid, CPR, Manual Handling and White Card. The Training Provider is Robinson College with the contact details being Ph (08) 8087 6022. Places are limited so get in early.

More information about the package and courses on offer are available via the NSW Department of Education web page at: [education.nsw.gov.au/summer-skills](http://education.nsw.gov.au/summer-skills)

### **WATER RESTRICTIONS:**

As residents are aware, Level 1 Water Restrictions are now applicable in Bourke and North Bourke.

Don't forget to be "water wise" in your water usage patterns and also please respect the restriction requirements.

Council at its meeting held on Monday, 23 November 2020, gave consideration to the Water Restrictions as included in the Drought Management Plan and made some amendments to ensure the amenity of Bourke is maintained during what is expected to be, a very hot summer.

As part of these discussions, and assuming there are no inflows, it is likely that Bourke will go to Level Two (2) Restrictions by Christmas and Level Three (3) restrictions in February 2021. Given this scenario, Council resolved to make representations to the Hon. Melinda Pavey, MP, Minister for Water, seeking an Environmental Flow of water from an appropriate water storage with a view to increased flows into the Darling River at Bourke to arrive in the early part of 2021. A letter has subsequently been forwarded to the Minister.

### **WESTERN WEIRS PROGRAM:**

Given that Bourke and North Bourke are once again on water restrictions, and after watching thousands of megalitres of water flow over the Bourke Weir earlier this year, the importance of increasing the capacity of the Bourke Weir Pool is again very much to the fore.

Whilst Council was prepared to fund the costs of undertaking an options study in respect of a new heightened weir at Bourke, at this stage this has not proceeded given the NSW Government has commissioned its Western Weirs Program. It is acknowledged that the process for this Strategy is comprehensive, however Council is concerned at the extended timeframes for the development and completion of this Strategy, let alone any ultimate construction in respect of a revised weir at Bourke, should that be the outcome.

In a Project Update Report issued last week by Water NSW, it was advised that the Project Team had continued meeting with Far West Councils, weir owners and other relevant government agencies and groups. The Project Teams advise that these meetings have been valuable for helping develop the Western Weirs Strategic Business Case (SBC), along with the modelling, surveying and engineering work required to assess the benefits, options and risks of the project.

Local knowledge and feedback is important, even in this early stage of the program, and the Project Team appreciates the feedback it has received to date on water security and quality, weir infrastructure and ownership, and the important social and cultural concerns of the communities in this region.

Engagement and input from Aboriginal stakeholders and communities is a key priority for the Western Weirs Strategic Business Case and Water NSW is working to develop the best approach for engagement with the region's communities.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, engagement with Aboriginal communities and general community groups is now scheduled for early 2021. This schedule also aligns with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE)-Water's consultation schedule so the plan to undertake such consultation jointly and reduce the consultation fatigue for communities.

For more information on the Western Weirs Program and to see previous project updates, go to the project website page: <https://www.waternsw.com.au/projects/new-dams-for-nsw/western-weirs-program>

#### **WILD DOG FENCE - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SESSIONS:**

As previously advised, Thursday, 10 December 2020, from 9 am - 1 pm, will see the Western Local Land Service (LLS) conduct a face-to-face community drop-in session to gather feedback, ideas, concerns and suggestions about the NSW Wild Dog Fence Extension Project to inform the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

There are also two (2) remaining online sessions which will be held as follows:

- Thursday, 3 December, 6-7 pm
- Tuesday, 15 December, 1-2 pm

Registration for either of these online session is available by emailing: [wilddogfence@scs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:wilddogfence@scs.nsw.gov.au)

To find out more visit [www.lls.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au) or contact the project team on (02) 5852 1215 (during business hours) or email [wilddogfence@scs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:wilddogfence@scs.nsw.gov.au)

#### **FREE OSTEOPATHY CLINIC:**

I received advice this week that there will be a Student-led Osteopathy Clinic held at the Bourke Multipurpose Service from 1 – 12 February next year. The Clinic will comprise of free 45min sessions and will be conducted by Southern Cross University 4th & 5th year Osteopathy Students who will be fully supervised by qualified staff. During the two (2) week clinic you can book in for two-three appointments if you desire.

Osteopathy is a way of diagnosing, treating and preventing health problems by moving, stretching and massaging a person's muscles and joints. Osteopathy is based on the principle that the wellbeing of an individual depends on their bones, muscles, ligaments and connective tissue functioning smoothly together.

Bookings for an appointment are via the North West Academic Centre (NWAC) and are essential. Please call the Academic Centre on 02 6870 2663 or 0429 525 244 for appointment times and more information.

#### **FOR SALE- 1928 RAIL CARRIAGE:**

Council currently has for sale a former NSW Railways Parcels Van. This van has an interesting history having begun its career as a suburban motor car built by Clyde Engineering in Sydney, delivered in December 1928 as part of a contract of 100. It had a seating capacity of 71 passengers.

The carriage operated suburban services in Sydney for many years until it was displaced by new double-deck cars in February 1975. In August 1976, it re-entered service as a parcels van operating dedicated

parcel delivery services across the Sydney metropolitan area. It was one of ten such vehicles. The van was used as a shunter at Flemington in its final years before being officially condemned in January 1993. From my enquiries, the carriage was transported to Bourke shortly thereafter and has resided in the town ever since.

Council is inviting expressions of interest for the purchase of this piece of rail history which close at 2.00pm on Friday, 11 December 2020.

Full details can be obtained from Councils website at the following link:  
<https://bourke.nsw.gov.au/council/tenders-and-quotations/>

It should be noted that in the event of Council not receiving a reasonable formal quotation from this process, Council will proceed to enter into direct negotiations with potential purchasers for the purchase and removal of the carriage.

#### **GRANT FOR BUS SHELTER:**

Council has been advised by Transport NSW that its submission for funding under the 2019-2021 Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme (CPTIGS) has been successful.

In this regard Council has been granted funding of \$11,000 for one new shelter to be constructed at Central Park, Bourke.

Council is appreciative of the Governments funding in this matter as we work in partnership to provide quality public transport infrastructure for passengers. Work in respect of the preparation of an appropriate design is underway.

#### **NRL IN THE BUSH:**

It has now been announced that the South Sydney Rabbitohs will play the Penrith Panthers in an NRL Round 11 match commencing at 2.00pm on Sunday, 23 May 2021 at Dubbo's Apex Oval. I have been assured that this will be a quality game.....assuming both teams carry their 2020 form into the new season. I would imagine that there would be a good crowd in attendance. If you're planning a weekend of it, I would suggest you make your accommodation bookings early.

#### **TOUSISM UPDATE**

The Jandra Paddleboat and Crossley Engine will cease to operate for the season from Monday, 7 December 2020, with both declining numbers, and the low river levels combining to influence this decision. The last opportunity to take a cruise on the Jandra will be Sunday, 6 December 2020.

As the tourist season winds down there will be reduced hours of operation in place for both the Visitor Information Office and Back O' Bourke Exhibition Centre with the facilities closed on the weekend effective from Saturday, 12 December 2020. Hours of operation from Monday to Friday will remain the same, opening at 9am and closing at 5.00pm, reduced hours of operation will be in place over the Christmas January period.

Whilst there will be a lull in tourist activities over the next few months, the Tourism and Events Manager and her staff are busy looking at a number of other promotions within the Shire. They are also looking to work with the organisers of some of the existing events within the Shire to improve the marketing of those events for 2021 and ensure that these events are included on any promotional material relating to Bourke.

Also high on the priority list for the team is to ensure that the tourism product within the Shire continues to be enhanced and in particular building upon our current attractions and assisting in their development and promotion.

Council is keen to further cement Bourke's reputation as a tourist destination

**CHRISTMAS CLOSEDOWN:**

The countdown is well and truly on.....Christmas is now but three (3) weeks away. This year, Council's Shire Office, Service NSW Agency and Library will close at 4.30pm on Wednesday, 23 December 2020 and re-open for business on Monday, 4 January 2021.

Don't forget that if you encounter a problem such as no filtered water supply, a water main break or a sewer choke, or for that matter any urgent issue over the Christmas/New Year period, please contact Council's Duty Officer on 0419 722 055.

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK!**

*"At Christmas, all roads lead home."*

*Marjorie Holmes*

Leonie Brown  
Acting General Manager