



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the
General Manager’s Desk”
4 November 2021”

Council Elections

Candidate nominations for the Council Elections, to be held on Saturday 4 December 2021, closed at noon yesterday. On the assumption that more candidates have nominated than the number of Councillor positions that are available (10), today will see the Returning Officer for Bourke conduct the ballot draw for the election. If you wish to see who the candidates are, go to the website:

www.elections.nsw.gov.au

Electoral Material.

Elections bring with them quite a few requirements relating to the display of electoral material. During what is called the “regulated election period” for the 4 December 2021 local government elections (being from Monday, 25 October to 6pm, Saturday 4 December 2021), all electoral material (how-to vote cards, posters, letter box drops, social media etc) must comply with the provisions of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

A person must not, during the regulated election period, print, publish, distribute or publicly display electoral material (other than the announcement in a newspaper of the holding of a meeting), without legibly showing on the material:

- the name and address of the person on whose instructions the material was printed, published, distributed or displayed and
- if the material has been printed, the name of the printer and the street address of the premises at which it was printed.

The address of a person means an address, including a full street address and suburb or locality that is located in Australia at which the person can usually be contacted during the day, but does not include a post office box.

Electoral material (how-to-vote cards) for distribution on election day must be registered with and approved by the Electoral Commissioner. The registration of electoral material period commences on Wednesday, 3 November 2021 and closes at 5:00pm, Friday, 26 November 2021.

The NSW Electoral Commission has developed an online registration system for the registration of electoral material, the system will be available from the NSW Electoral Commission website from Thursday, 4 November. Posters are not required to be registered but they must comply with the requirements detailed in the Candidate Handbook.

COVID and the Election.

There was a fair amount of speculation in local government circles as to whether the already postponed Council elections would actually proceed on 4 December 2021 given the state of COVID. Happily, the elections are going ahead and COVID cases are reducing off the back of high vaccination rates. However, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission between electors, election officials and candidate volunteers, (those who hand out the “how-to-vote” flyers) the usual “six metre rule” is being extended to 100 metres with the Electoral Commissioner issuing new directions under the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*:

- No electoral material is to be handed out, or left out for collection, in a publicly owned or occupied area (such as on the footpath) that is within 100 metres of the entrance to a polling place or a pre-polling venue on polling days, and
- No posters can be displayed in a publicly owned or occupied area (such as on the footpath or school fences) within 100 metres of the entrance to a polling place or pre-poll venue on polling days, unless they are put in place before 7am (and are otherwise lawful and safe – such as not obstructing electors or other people). Any posters put in place before 7am on a polling day must not to be adjusted or moved again until after 7pm. This direction applies to all types of posters, including A-frames and corflutes.

Material or posters that contravene these directions can be confiscated and destroyed by election officials. Fair few rules associated with elections!

Remembrance Day

At 11 am on 11 November 1918 the guns on the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of continuous warfare. The allied armies had driven the German invaders back, having inflicted heavy defeats upon them over the preceding four months. In November 1918, the Germans called for an armistice (suspension of fighting) in order to secure a peace settlement. They accepted allied terms that amounted to unconditional surrender.

The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the moment when hostilities ceased on the Western Front, became universally associated with the remembrance of those who had died in the war. This first modern world conflict had brought about the mobilisation of over 70 million people and left between 9 and 13 million dead, perhaps as many as one-third of them with no known grave. These numbers are staggering in terms of the related pain and suffering endured by so many. The allied nations chose this day and time for the commemoration of their war dead.

Next Thursday, 11 November is the 103rd Anniversary of Remembrance Day. In Bourke, across towns and cities around Australia, and for that matter at locations around the world, people will gather and pause for one minute to remember the service and sacrifice of our veterans and current serving personnel. Whilst there will be a service at the Bourke Cenotaph in Central Park, if you can't attend, I would like to suggest that you find a quiet spot and pause for a minute and reflect on the sacrifices that so many have made, and continue to make, in respect of our freedoms.

Vaccination Certificates

I wrote last week as to how double vaccinated members of the community could integrate their COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate into their Service NSW app. For those double vaccinated residents who aren't able to access their vaccination certificate on a mobile phone App, I received advice this week from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) that there are a number of options available. You can either:

- Ask the provider who vaccinated you to provide you with a paper copy of the vaccination certificate.
- Visit a Services Australia Service Centre (Centrelink in Bourke at the corner of Richard Street & Mertin Street, Bourke). Ask and they will provide you with a printed copy – if that’s not possible they can mail it to you.
- Contact the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 and they will post out a copy – estimated postage time 14 days.

With the media reporting that the NSW government is considering “pushing back the reopening date for unvaccinated people in a bid to boost the state’s inoculation coverage, with senior ministers now eyeing a potential double-dose rate of 95 per cent” which may result in freedoms for unvaccinated people previously identified from 1 December 2021 being postponed, there are plenty of medical providers in Bourke who can provide vaccination shots for the 300 or so people over 12 years of age in Bourke who aren’t as yet vaccinated.

Movember

Movember is an annual, month-long celebration of the moustache, to highlight men's health issues, specifically prostate cancer and depression in men. Mo Bros, supported by their Mo Sistas, started Movember (November 1st) clean shaven and then have the remainder of the month to grow and groom their moustache. During Movember, each Mo Bro effectively becomes a walking billboard for men's health and, via their Mo, raises essential funds and awareness for Movember's men's health partners.

There are some interesting statistics regarding men’s health, or really, the lack of it.....

- Men’s health is in crisis. Men are dying on average 5 years earlier than women, and for largely preventable reasons.
- A growing number of men – around 10.8M globally – are facing life with a prostate cancer diagnosis. Globally, testicular cancer is the most common cancer among young men.
- Across the world, one man dies by suicide every minute of every day, with males accounting for 75% of all suicides.

As men, we so often take the “she’ll be right” approach to our health. Whilst some may grow the Mo, each to their own, take control of your health, and make regular appointments with your Doctor for a regular check-up and then take their advice.

Better Baaka Program

The Minister for Water, Property and Housing, the Hon Melinda Pavey, last week released a Media Release proposing infrastructure improvements and operating rules to make the Darling-Baaka river system “more flexible, so its rivers and floodplains can be maintained, and sustainable local communities, agriculture and industries can be supported.” One of the identified proposals in the release relates to the upgrading of the weir at Bourke to “provide greater town water security, increase fish passage and better manage Norther Basin Flows.” Sounding positive.

To learn more, it is advised that Water Infrastructure NSW is hosting a series of webinars to introduce the Better Baaka program to stakeholders. The first webinar was held yesterday, with a further webinar being held on Wednesday, 10 November 2021 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

To register go to www.water.dppe.nsw.gov.au and search Better Baaka Program.

Quote: “We just want to find something to beat him, but to be honest we can’t find one.”

The boss of Ladbrokes Betting Agency talking about Melbourne Cup favourite, Incentivise. Time will have told by the time the Western Herald is published.