



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

**“From the
General Manager’s Desk”
9 December 2021”**

Mayoral Election

Last Saturday some 5 million residents from 124 local government areas across New South Wales went to the polls to elect and determine their Councillors to represent them on their respective local council for the period up until 14 September 2024. Council terms are generally four (4) year terms. However, with the postponement of the elections from September 2020 till September 2021 and ultimately till last Saturday, the current term of this Council will be a tad under three (3) years.

In Bourke, as residents would be aware, there was no election with ten (10) nominations received for the ten (10) councillor positions. The election in Bourke has been declared by the Returning Officer and the new Bourke Council is now in place effective election day. Very efficient! In those localities where an election was necessary, the Electoral Commission has advised that they will be declaring the results from between 21 – 23 December 2021. Councils then have three (3) weeks to hold their Mayoral Elections. This will ensure a very busy and in some cases a somewhat manic start to the 2022 new year for these Councils. Much politicking often proceeds Mayoral elections in many Councils. In Bourke with the election already declared our timings for a Mayoral Election can be rather staid, and in this regard, the Mayoral Election for the Bourke Mayor will be held tomorrow, Friday 10 December 2021 at 12.00 noon in the Council Chamber. Double vaccinated members of the public are welcome to attend.

Christmas In the Park.

Tomorrow night, Friday 10 December 2021, from 6-9pm in Central Park, Bourke is the day, time and place for Bourke’s Annual “Christmas in the Park” event. Presented by Maranguka and Bourke Shire Council, the annual event is shaping up to be another fantastic community event. This free event will see Central Park transformed into a wonderland for all kids with activities abound including, a visit by Santa and his elves, entertainment, a giant slide, jumping castle, sumo wrestlers, food and drink stalls and of course, market stalls.

Back O’ Bourke “Light up the Night” Christmas Competition –

The “Light up the Night” Christmas Competition is being held again this year. Stock up on your Christmas decorations and lights by purchasing them from our local businesses and be in the running to win the award as the best Christmas Light display in Bourke for 2021. Residents are encouraged to decorate their home and get into the festive season.

Judging has commenced and the winners will be announced over 2WEB on Monday 20th December with lots of prizes to be won. Contact the Back O’ Bourke Information and Tourism Centre to find out more details on 6872 1321.

Expected Flooding Levels

With recent major flooding along the Namoi River at Gunnedah and Narrabri in NSW; at Goondiwindi on the Macintyre River in Qld; along the Condamine River at Chinchilla and below, also in Qld; and the Macquarie River below the 137% full Burrendong Dam, to name but a few swelling tributaries that eventually flow into the Darling River above Bourke, there is considerable conjecture amongst local pundits as to what level the Darling River will rise to in weeks to come.

What is undisputed is that with all the extra rain and water coming down into our river systems, flooding will happen in the Bourke Shire late this year or early next year. The Western Local Land Services have noted that whilst a lot of landholders are already quiet flood ready, for those that are new to the area, they are advising all landholders to relocate livestock, pumps, chemicals, and any equipment to higher ground. In their advice they raised some good points, including:

- Every flood is different, so landholders should plan for all risks and possible impacts.
- It is important to think about whether livestock should be moved to higher ground and if you have enough supplies should your property become isolated.
- If possible, planning in advance and preparing your property early will allow you to recover much quicker and be able to get back to business.
- Landholders are encouraged to read the Farm Flood Readiness Kit that provides useful tips to help make your property flood ready. Go to www.lls.nsw.gov.au and search flood readiness kit.

As so often in life, information is king. Keep an eye out for weather updates and warnings from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), as well as flood alerts on the State Emergency Service (SES) website.

As of late last week, the SES had advised that based on historical flood data, they can get very good estimates of downstream flooding once they see a peak at Walgett. That said, the SES were already estimating the expected flows may be similar to that experienced earlier in 2021.

The SES also noted, pleasingly, that plans are well underway for their deployment of flood crews, including aviation support and in water flood rescue teams, well ahead of any flood peaks to Far West communities along the Barwon and Darling Rivers. The situation is being closely monitored by the SES, Council, Police and others. I spoke last week about the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) ceasing its meetings given the time since the last COVID case in Bourke. Its back to business with the Committee again meeting, this time to prepare for the high flows in the river. Like many people, the Committee are keen to learn of expected levels in Bourke once the upstream peaks are known.

Shop Local this Christmas and support our local business.

I encouraged residents last week to shop locally for Christmas and support small businesses in the Bourke community. I consider it important that the message be continually pushed as local business is just so important to us all. Keep the money in town and support the locals. Residents can give a shout out to your favourite local business on social media. Bourke Shire Council will also be spreading the message on its social media pages with a focus on a different industry each week. We thank the Western Herald and 2WEB for supporting our "Shop Local" campaign this festive season.

Remember, local businesses are owned by people who live in our community and so are less likely to leave and are more committed to our community's welfare and future. Spending your money at local businesses supports other local business which in turn stimulates our local economy.

COVID Recovery Funding

Projects to help regional communities bounce back from the impacts of border restrictions will roll out across the State borders under a \$10 million COVID Recovery round of the Cross- Border Commissioner's Infrastructure Fund. The Infrastructure Fund works with other jurisdictions to ensure cross-border communities don't miss out on local projects like, telecommunications and digital connectivity, accessing water supply or delivering social and sporting clubhouses or halls. Regional councils, community and sporting groups, and charities can now apply for the latest round of grants from the value of \$25,000 to deliver projects within three years.

Interested applicants are invited to contact the Office of the NSW Cross-Border Commissioner with an outline of the proposed project. Funding is available to support infrastructure proposals in cross-border communities where there is a formal whole of government cross-border agreement in place. Proposals do require co-investment, proportionate to the benefit, from the neighbouring jurisdiction or private partner(s). The COVID recovery round expressions of interest close on 28 January 2022. To lodge an expression of interest and for further information about the fund, including program guidelines go to www.regional.nsw.gov.au/our-work/ocbc. Applicants can contact the Office of the NSW Cross-Border Commissioner by email at enquiries@cbc.nsw.gov.au.

The Ashes

It's official. Summer is here with the pinnacle of the test cricket calendar in Australia, the Ashes against England, having started its current series yesterday at the Gabba in Brisbane. Cricket Australia notes that the term "The Ashes" originated back in 1882 when the Australian cricket team chalked up their first win on English soil. At the time, the defeat was considered the death of English cricket. A British newspaper, which reported this demise, was burnt and the ashes of which were sealed in an urn and gifted to the English Captain. Folklore was created and the fiercest of rivalries unveiled. Last played for in 2019, Australia currently holds the urn. With a new Captain and a fair amount of controversy currently surrounding the Australian Men's Cricket Team, it will undoubtedly be another compelling series.

Quote: "There is but one thing of real value – to cultivate truth and justice, and to live without anger in the midst of lying and unjust men."- Marcus Aurelius