



**BOURKE  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL**

“From the  
General Manager’s Desk”  
16 December 2021”

**Mayoral Election**

The election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Bourke Shire Council was held last Friday. In an uncontested election for Mayor, Councillor Barry Hollman continues in the role for the period from last Friday till 25 September 2023. Councillor Lachlan Ford was declared Deputy Mayor, also in an uncontested election, for the same period. Congratulations are extended to both Barry and Lachie.

In addition to the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the agenda for the meeting included each Councillor, regardless of whether they were new to Council or a returning Councillor, to either take an Oath or make an Affirmation of office, as required under the Local Government Act.

Both the Oath and the Affirmation provides for Councillors to commit to faithfully and impartially carrying out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.

In effect, the Oath or Affirmation of Office is a “swearing in” of the new Council, similar to how Ministers of the Crown are sworn in before the Governor General or Governor at Federal and State level respectively. Unfortunately, it is fair to say that at all levels of government, there are many examples of where people have forgotten what they initially committed to in undertaking their roles. To remind councillors in local government in NSW of their obligations, a new provision titled a Statement of Ethical Obligations has been included in the Model Code of Meeting Practice, as released by the Office of Local Government. This means that Business Papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of councils must contain a statement reminding councillors of their Oath or Affirmation of office made under the Act and their obligations under the council’s code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

**Parking in Oxley St**

I have previously encouraged the community to shop locally and support small businesses in the lead up to Christmas. As you know, local businesses are owned by locals who live in our community who are less likely to leave and are 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. One of the detractors to people shopping locally in the main street of Bourke is the inability to park in Oxley St when the spaces are taken up by non shoppers. I would ask that all people who work in the main street of Bourke have regard to the importance of shoppers in the lead up to Christmas and during this period, find alternative parking away from the main street. Every car space helps.

### **Christmas In the Park.**

A successful “Christmas in the Park” event was held last Friday in Central Park, Bourke. Presented by Maranguka and Bourke Shire Council, the annual event proved to be another fantastic community event with Central Park transformed into a wonderland for all kids with activities abounding including the visit, of course, by Santa, entertainment, a giant slide, sumo wrestlers, food and drink stalls and of course, market stalls. A big thank you to all who contributed to the staging of the event. Successful events just don’t happen by themselves with invariably a significant amount of work behind the scene to ensure the events success. Plans are well underway for the Australia Day activities on 26 January 2022 with the initial planning meeting for the 2022 Bourke Easter Festival held last week.

### **Grant Funding**

Two more projects will be delivered in Bourke Shire under the latest round of funding under the NSW Government’s Stronger Country Communities Fund. The announcement last week will see Council receive \$769,000 to undertake two projects with \$269,000 being for upgrades to the Female Jockey Change Rooms at Renshaw Oval and \$500,409 for the development of two Ladies change rooms at Davidson Oval.

This funding by the NSW Government, brings to over \$2 million the amount of funding that Council has received through the first four rounds of the Stronger Country Community program.

The focus of funding in this latest round is the delivery of female sporting projects, including the construction or upgrading of female changerooms, additional amenity blocks and bathrooms, and playing surfaces like netball and tennis courts with the aim being to make it easier for women and girls to be a part of their local sports team.

### **EV Vehicles**

The NSW Government has recently announced that it is seeking potential Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Site Hosts across NSW, especially for locations and businesses in regional NSW, to begin building a \$131 million EV Fast Charging network across NSW. The Government is co-funding an ultra-fast electric vehicle (EV) charging network across the state. NSW Government is currently looking for landowners and lease holders that might be interested in hosting EV charging stations, so that they may provide a list of possible sites to potential developers (Charge Point Operators).

Under the NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy, this investment will expand existing public fast charging across the state. This involves co-funding private industry to build and operate charging stations every 100km along major NSW highways, and every 5km along commuter corridors in metropolitan NSW. The strategy is intended to increase EV sales to 52% of all new car sales by 2030–31 and help NSW achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. Council has previously entered into an agreement with the NRMA in respect of the installation of an EV charging hub in Bourke for the convenience of EV owners.

Whilst it may be a while before there is much of a take up of EV’s in the Bourke area, it is evident to me that EV’s are well and truly now coming as a mainstream product. One of my former Mayor’s at Dubbo City Council was Matthew Dickerson and his Mayoral vehicles, over time, were a series of EV’s. These EV’s were a long way from the numerous 6 litre Holden Caprices that Council generally acquired. To his credit when no longer Mayor, Matthew “put his money where his mouth is” and acquired himself a Tesla EV.

## **The Ashes**

With the 1<sup>st</sup> test of the Ashes Cricket Series having been “run and won,” the big highlight was the first ball dismissal of English opener, Joe Burns, by Australian fast bowler, Mitchell Starc. Starc’s success with his first ball wicket was reportedly only the 4<sup>th</sup> time in the 140-year history of the Ashes that such an occurrence had been achieved. The significance of the occasion was evident in the emotion of the commentator’s voices when I heard a compilation of commentator’s responses to the wicket the following morning. Whilst their emotion sent a shiver through me, as a cricket watcher, I certainly miss the combined talents of the lauded Channel 9 Central Commentary Team comprising the Late Richie Benuad, Tony Greig and Max Walker, and Bill Lawry, Ian Chapell, Mark Taylor. They were good and laid the platform for the upbeat commentators of today.

## **End of Year Celebrations**

I was out in Bourke on Wednesday evening and as I walked into the Bowling Club, Ben Smith, the principal of Bourke Public School, along with parents and students, were walking out after the schools end of year presentation function. It got me thinking of the various events that my wife and I were fortunate enough to attend over the years involving our three (3) children. What a fantastic time and a time that has passed so quickly. One event that I wasn’t able to get to involving one of my children was last Friday when my daughter was admitted as a lawyer at an admission ceremony at the NSW Supreme Court in Sydney. She too had to take an Oath or make an affirmation and had to sign the Supreme Court roll. It doesn’t seem that long ago that she started school and to her considerable credit she has achieved much since. Best of all she is a nice person and as parents, that’s a pretty good outcome.

**Quote: “In one month from today (10/12), around 2.27 million Aussie kids aged five to 11 years will have the opportunity to roll up their sleeve and get vaccinated against COVID-19.”**

Prime Minister Scott Morrison in announcing an extension to Australia’s COVID-19 vaccination program.