



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

29 Mitchell St, Bourke, N.S.W. 2840
P.O. Box 21, Bourke, N.S.W. 2840
Telephone (02)6830 8000
Email: bourkeshire@bourke.nsw.gov.au
Web: <http://www.bourke.nsw.gov.au>

19 January 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

MAYOR EXPRESSES CONCERNS RE BAIL OUTCOMES.....AGAIN.

Mayor of Bourke, Councillor Barry Hollman, has again expressed frustration at the States bail laws following a spate of criminal activity in Bourke in recent times.

"The constant bailing of youths involved in crime in Bourke is so frustrating for all the law-abiding residents of Bourke" the Mayor said.

He continued, "It is my understanding that on the weekend a youth was arrested in Bourke for allegedly stealing a car, the exact offence for which he is currently on bail for. Police do all the good work. They track down and arrest the alleged perpetrator, bail refuse them based on the evidence, and then over the weekend the matter goes to Parramatta Bail Court and the Court bails the alleged offender."

The Mayor was making comment after a series of incidents in recent weeks that had seen children and youths involved in malicious damage, break and enter and steal motor vehicle incidents.

"It is understood that children as young as eight (8) years of age are allegedly responsible for the smashing of plate glass windows in business premises along with break and enter incidents around Bourke in recent weeks. Local businesses are finding business difficult enough at the moment as a result of the uncertainties created by the COVID pandemic without having to endure the expense of responding to this crime." the Mayor said.

Clr Hollman noted the very young age of some of the alleged perpetrators and raised significant concern at the lack of parental/carer responsibility being provided to these children.

"The majority of the incidents in Bourke would appear to take place in the early hours of the morning" the Mayor said. "It is of considerable concern that children of such a young age are out walking the streets at all hours and causing trouble. Their parents or carers really should have a close look at their parenting or carer skills. As parents and carers, they are the role models to these children in their formative years, influencing greatly the values that these young people will ultimately live by as they go through life."

The Mayor further advised that he had previously corresponded with the NSW Attorney General and met with the President of the NSW Children's Court regarding the issue of bail and youth offenders. "As it stands, the system isn't working. It is not meeting the needs of our young, disenfranchised children and it is certainly not meeting the expectations of the community. It is so frustrating" the Mayor concluded.

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Media contact: Mayor Barry Hollman - m: 0409 037 903.