



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the
Acting General Manager’s
Desk – 30 May 2024”

Tancred Drive Walkway

On my recent return to Bourke, I was pleased to see Council crews erecting movement activated solar lighting on the Tancred Drive Walkway which heads towards, but at this point doesn't quite get to, North Bourke. In all 30 light poles will be erected further enhancing the community's usage of this walkway. Regular walks, and activity in general are such an important component in terms of a person's quality of life. In this regard, the benefits of a daily 30-minute walk are well documented and include improved circulation, better bones, a longer life span, an improved mood, strengthened muscles, improved sleep, improved breathing rates, reduced mental decline, and of course, weight loss. I look forward to seeing plenty of people out on the walkway undertaking their daily walk during my time in Bourke.

Seat Belt Laws

For more than 50 years it has been a requirement to wear a seatbelt in a car in NSW. Between 2018 and 2022, more than 140 lives were lost on NSW roads in fatal crashes where people were not wearing a seatbelt. Studies show that seatbelts double the chance of surviving a crash and reduce the risk of injury. Unfortunately, lives continue to be lost and people seriously injured from not wearing a seatbelt or not wearing it properly. With a view to addressing the non-wearing of seatbelts, the NSW Government are reminding all drivers and passengers, that effective 1 July 2024, that mobile phone detection cameras will begin identifying seatbelt offences.

Whilst I understand that most motorists buckle up every time, and despite 50 years of enforcement and a litany of public awareness campaigns, the NSW Police issue fines to more than 10,000 people a year for not wearing a seatbelt. I don't know the locality of mobile phone detection cameras in NSW, however, with more than 84 per cent of fatalities and two-thirds of serious injuries where people are not wearing seatbelts occurring on country roads, it would be a fair bet to assume that these fixed cameras will be rolled out to country localities, if they're not already in place. It should also be noted that some of these mobile detection cameras are themselves mobile, meaning that they can be shifted around quite readily and can often be seen on country roads.

Back O' Bourke Show 'N' Shine

Don't forget that the Bourke Historic Vehicle Club is holding its Show 'N' Shine for 2024 this Saturday, 1 June 2024. With entries opening at 9.00am, judging starting at 10.00am and presentations commencing after 1.00pm, the Bourke Showground at the Renshaw will undoubtedly be a hive of activity on the day.

Categories up for competition include the Best Historic Vehicle, Best Overall Vehicle of the Day, Best Motorcycle and Best Vehicle under 30 years, the Roughest Vehicle and a People's Choice Award.

The Bourke Historic Vehicle Club is a most active club in our community and are to be congratulated for what they do in supporting Bourke. I trust the Club has a successful day.

Regional Crime Inquiry

Don't forget that submissions to the NSW Parliament's Regional Crime Inquiry close tomorrow, 31 May 2024. Unfortunately, over the years, various Bourke residents have been victims of all levels and types of crime. Given this, the inquiry into Community Safety in Regional and Rural Communities provides a perfect opportunity for community members to have their say.

Regardless of whether you have been impacted by crime at home, at work or in the general community, know someone who has, whether you work or have previously worked in related services, or come from another state or country that has implemented great working strategies, I would encourage you to make your voice heard by making a submission. It doesn't have to be a novel, just a summary of your experiences. By providing your experiences, the elected Members of Parliament will obtain a better understanding of society such that when they are making decisions, our confidence in our own safety is enhanced.

Recent data released by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, via its Regional NSW Crime, Law and Order Report, shows that regional NSW has far worse reported crime figures than Sydney. Whilst the policy makers and Government departments see the numbers, a submission is the best way for these people to really understand what crime has done to people in the regions and what consequences or potential solutions are, when we do not feel safe in our own homes. Further details on the Inquiries Terms of Reference and how to make a submission can be found at:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=3042>

Planning Changes

On the topic of making a submission, the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) has recently issued an invite for people to 'have a say' in respect of proposed changes to complying development standards for farm buildings, sheds and earthworks on rural land. The changes are aimed at making it easier for landowners and councils to understand the development standards and environmental requirements that apply for farm buildings, sheds and excavation on rural land.

The proposed changes to the standards include the introduction of complying development standards for the maximum footprint of each farm building and the total footprint of all farm buildings permitted under the Rural Housing Code, as currently only limited locations have specific controls; increasing the maximum farm building sizes allowed on rural properties as complying development under the Inland Code – these are the same size requirements that would be introduced to the Rural Housing Code; reducing the size of sheds permitted in Zone R5 Large Lot Residential under the Rural Housing Code and changing the shed sizes permitted under the Inland Code to align with these controls; aligning excavation requirements for complying development in the Rural Housing Code with those in the Inland Code; and allowing complying development on Class 2 acid sulfate soil areas under most of the complying codes, where development is supported by a Preliminary Soil Assessment. The Department is also seeking feedback on the current provisions for connecting a water supply to farm buildings and detached studios, to ensure they are still fit-for-purpose.

The proposed changes are outlined in detail in an explanation of intended effect document available at

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/draftplans/exhibition/proposed-changes-complying-development-farm-buildings-rural-sheds-and-earthworks> with submissions open until Friday 14 June 2024 at 5pm.

The Dragons

Councils General Manager, Leonie, is a West Tigers supporter and I notice from her Columns she has steered away from any comments relating to the National Rugby League. As a most interested observer, and a solid St George Dragons fan, I am pleased at the progress of the Dragons under the direction of new coach, Shane Flanagan. Already this season, the Dragons have won more games than they did throughout the whole 2023 season and as I write this column, sit in 9th position due to for and against, on the same points as the Rooster and the Knight. I can't see the Dragons winning the competition, but they're generally having a go and are much more competitive than in 2023.

I think that at this point of the competition, the 2024 season will go down as the "Year of the Injury." The number of injuries to players this year has been substantial, and we haven't even got to State of Origin yet. Hamstring injuries appear to abound. For instance, on a recent edition of Big Sports Breakfast aired prior to Magic Round in Brisbane, the radio team worked out that between 2018-2023, there was an average of 23 hamstring injuries per year and that for this year, there had already been 20 hamstring injuries (on-field), with another dozen players sidelined because of training hamstring injuries. That's a big increase. For whoever wins the competition, I consider that it will be a case of the last person standing!

I was listening to Phil Gould being interviewed some 3-4 weeks ago on the issue of State of Origin. He was reluctant to engage on the matter. "State of Origin is still 6 weeks away. Between now and then there will be injuries, withdrawals and the like," he said. "Talk to me when we know who is available." He was 100% correct with the player stocks for both State of Origin teams subsequently decimated because of injuries to numerous players including hamstring injuries to Nathan Cleary and Tom Trbojevic and the groin injury impacting Cameron Muster, to name but a few of the injured players.

Quote: "The Parramatta Eels have this afternoon informed Brad Arthur that his tenure as Head Coach has ended, effective immediately," Another coach is terminated making two (2) this year already and the NRL season is still only about halfway through. Coaches in both the AFL and NRL are in high pressure roles and with the focus on results coaches seemed to be subject to intense and ongoing scrutiny with their future periodically subject to speculation.