



COMMUNITY CONNECT

Coonamble Shire community newsletter for the interest of residents and visitors

February 2020

From the Mayor's Desk



Council's first meeting for 2020 was held on Wednesday 12 February. My colleagues and I are pleased to get back to business following recess over the Christmas / New Year period and, indeed, January which traditionally, is a quiet time.

Our meeting day included a comprehensive and informative workshop with representatives of the consultancy firm, sala4D, which has been assigned to develop the Coonamble Shire Council Masterplan. I am pleased to say it is well on track, with some exciting enhancements on the drawing board. A rundown of the Masterplan progress is elsewhere in this newsletter.

Following the pre-meeting session, we had a presentation from Mr Tim Collins, Senior Planner and Mr Wayne Garnsey, Team Leader, Department of Planning and Environment, Dubbo. Council invited them to speak about our Local Strategic Planning Statement which will be adopted by Council within the next two months.

Future planning of our Shire is of paramount importance and will be guided by the Central West and Orana Regional Plan, which feeds to the Coonamble Local Strategic Planning Statement, then the Western Sub Regional Land Use Strategy, finally Council's own LEP. It's also a very complex matter and due to time restraints at the meeting, Messrs Collins and Garnsey have agreed to revisit Coonamble to workshop with Councillors and Staff. This will be arranged as soon as practical. One of Council's biggest issues is the need to revisit the 1000ha minimum requirement for housing entitlements on rural allotments. This will be one of the main topics at the workshop and I'll keep our residents informed.

Mrs Susan Walker addressed Council during Community Consultation. She referred to service to the community by her late husband, former Councillor John (*Bunda*) Walker and requested that a plaque be erected at a suitable location in Macdonald Park in his memory. Mrs Walker suggested that Council consider installing plaques to acknowledge former Councillors who have served our community over the years. Council did agree to place a plaque in Macdonald Park in memory of "Bunda".

Should anyone wish to contact me to discuss issues or concerns, please phone **0427 887 666**. I look forward to representing all our residents and encourage your phone calls.

Ahmad Karanouh
Mayor

Councillors view masterplan concepts



Concept designs presented to Council at the February meeting

Councillors were presented with an update on the Masterplan process at the February meeting, and participated in a workshop with consultants to provide their feedback on initial ideas and plans.

During consultation at the end of last year, our community gave direction about the design and aesthetic, capacity for activities and the availability of amenities in our towns and villages.

The community wants nature-based experiences and activities that reflect a vibrant town life. Amenities that are important to our community are the pools, shade and public toilets. To reflect this, the draft masterplan will include provisions for more shade trees, enhancement of cultural heritage and public art which reflects community values. Plans for an artesian bore bath are being developed.

Creating tourism opportunities is a focus of the Masterplan, and as part of the workshop, Councillors were presented with design concepts for a new Visitor Information Centre. The new VIC will be built at the northern end of Smith Park, roughly opposite the water tower.

A bird theme will continue in the area, with the contemporary design of the VIC reflecting the shape of an emu foot. Recommendations to improve the appearance of town entrances included tree plantings, signage and sculptural installations to welcome people as they arrive.

The main street of Coonamble was discussed in detail, with many considerations about the revitalisation of the precinct. An urban park, public toilet, new parking configurations and pedestrian only laneway attractions were investigated, with Councillors providing guidance to allow the consultants to finalise their recommendations in the Masterplan.

After overwhelming community feedback that Council's logo is not representative of our community, three new design options were presented. Councillors chose a preferred option which will be tweaked to provide a brand for Coonamble Shire Council and our local tourism offering.

The next step is for the consultants to update current plans and ideas with Councillors' feedback from the workshop. The Masterplan will be ready for public exhibition and comment in April.

Meeting mentions

Masterplan for Coonamble Pool and Macdonald Park Precinct

Council included in its 2019/2020 Operational Plan funds for the development of a stage of life assessment and a masterplan for the Coonamble Pool. The scope of works was then extended to include the development of Macdonald Park.

A list of “desirables” was identified by Council and considered as part of this development. These include more parking for pool patrons, location of the skate bowl, more open space, connectivity of both facilities and the ability to carry out the works in a staged delivery program

Two options were submitted to the meeting; both provided additional parking and the suggested ‘ideal’ site for the proposed skate bowl. After much deliberation, Council decided on Option 2 Concept Plan, which will be included in the overarching Coonamble Shire Masterplan.

2019-2020 Operational Plan Performance Review

In conjunction with the December 2019 quarterly budget review, Council was informed of the progress of all principal activities against the actions within the Operational Plan 2019-2020 and progress towards meeting the outcomes in its four (4) year Delivery Program. In this last six monthly progress report many projects have either been completed, commenced and/or are in progress.

The reporting period was from 1 July to 31 December 2019 and 15 major highlights were listed. Mayor Karanouh said, “Council understands that sometimes the community is of the opinion that

everything takes too long to come to fruition, but there are processes to undertake and this all takes time – be assured we are achieving the goals set.”

Adoption of Economic Development Strategy

In 2017, Council received a draft Economic Development Strategy, but at the time it was not adopted in favour of developing a more concise higher level document. The Strategy has been reviewed and updated to reflect and define benefits to the community, increased investment and employment opportunities and initiatives that will have positive social impact.

Invitation to join the Orana Joint Organisation

Correspondence from The Minister for Local Government, The Hon Shelley Hancock MP, encouraging Council to join the Orana Joint Organisation (JO).

Early on, when JOs were first being established Council advised that it would not be participating, preferring to ‘stand alone’.

After extensive research and ground work, Council agreed that our area would be better suited to the Far North Western JO for various reasons, including the tourism potential, however, the application was not accepted.

In dealing with the matter and being mindful of the amount of work Council has before it in the short to medium term, Council resolved to inform Minister Hancock that no decision would be made until after the next local government elections in September 2020.

EOIs - Road Committee

Expressions of interest (EOIs) are invited from community members who would like to participate in Council’s Roads Committee.

The requirements for appointment to this Community Committee of Council are as follows;

- A commitment to the activities of the Committee and a willingness to be actively involved in Coonamble issues.
- Community representation nominated for the Committee must be a resident of the Local

Government Area (LGA).

- Members must be prepared to actively serve the Committee until September 2020.
- Members must be prepared to operate under Council's Code of Conduct and Manual for Community Committees of Council.

EOIs must be in writing and addressed to the General Manager, Coonamble Shire Council, PO Box 249, Coonamble, NSW, 2829 will be received up until 12 noon on Monday 2 March 2020.

Sportsground upgrade

Council has just received the exciting news that its submission under the NSW Government Drought Communities Program – Extension has been successful.

An application for \$1,000,000 to upgrade the Coonamble Sportsground was lodged late last year.

The works to be undertaken will entail a significant upgrade to the lighting and playing surfaces and replacement of the cricket pitch and associated works.

Painting of infrastructure and renewal of main oval perimeter fencing will complete the project.

These major works will ensure our sportsground is one of the best in the region and will provide the community with an opportunity to host major events in not only the sporting sector, but cultural events as well.

Show holiday gazetted

The community is advised that two public holidays have been gazetted for the Coonamble Shire Council area, being the second day of Coonamble Show for 2020 and 2021.

This year the holiday is Wednesday 27 May and in 2021, Wednesday 19 May.

Gazettal of the holidays is under the Public Holidays Act 2010 and notification was published in the Government Gazette dated 16 December 2019.

Seniors travel cards

Applications for regional Seniors travel cards are now open. The card is primarily used to ease the cost of travel, with a pre-paid amount of \$250 on the card.

It can be used for pre-booked regional coach and bus travel, fuel and taxis.

Although applications are now open the cards will not be distributed to eligible seniors until mid-February.

This is a fantastic initiative and will benefit many seniors across the Shire.

Unfortunately our local Service NSW agency cannot process the application, but staff will assist customers to complete their applications online. If you know of anyone who could use a card, please let them know.

FOR INFORMATION

This newsletter has been produced by Coonamble Shire Council for the benefit of residents of the Coonamble, Gulargambone, Quambone and surrounding areas.

Hein Basson
GENERAL MANAGER

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