

## **FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK**

In accordance with Council's policy, the October meeting was held in Quambone at the Memorial Hall on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup>. It was nice to see the community out in force – Council's visits to Quambone always spark interest with the locals.

Mrs Garnsey gave an update on the fuel depot - at this stage it is hoped the facility will be operational on Friday 19 October, however more will be known after Tuesday 16 October when a meet and greet will be held with community members and the fuel suppliers. Unfortunately, at this stage, it appears that Eftpos will not be installed, however all community members will have the opportunity to access the facility. The Committee is continuing to lobby for eftpos – so we'll just have to wait and see what transpires.

During the meeting we considered a letter from the Office of Local Government (OLG) responding to Council's advice that it wished to join the Far North West JO. The OLG said that the NSW Government has not proclaimed Coonamble into the Far North West Joint Organisation, so in accordance with our previous decision, we will remain a "stand alone" council.

Who knows what will be decided 12 months down the track, when the Government is evaluating the success, or otherwise, of JOs and identifying improvements – which may include a review of state planning boundaries. As our residents know, this has been a grey area for a long time – so deciding to have a "wait and see" attitude I think is the best decision at this point.

Early in October our Local Member for Barwon, Kevin Humphries visited Coonamble and met with the General Manager and myself before making a public announcement about Council's successful grant applications under the Stronger Communities Program – the Coonamble Children's Services was also successful with its application.

This was a wonderful outcome, all the projects put forward were approved for funding – well done Council staff!!! Another factor that I'm sure had bearing on our success was Council's decision to provide a co-contribution towards the project cost – we are very lucky that we are in a position to do this – it comes down to good financial management!! Mr. Humphries discussed with us funding opportunities which would be available in the near future. He said he would strongly support an application from Council for funding under the Fixing Country Roads Program to seal the Tooraweenah Road. I have been trying for a long time to have this major road sealed and this may be our chance.

I must congratulate the Coonamble Greyhound Racing Club on another successful carnival over the September/October long weekend. I attended the event on Sunday afternoon, 31 September and was amazed at the big crowd in attendance. The committee should be proud of the facility – the track is a credit to members who must put in the “hard yards” to maintain it in such good condition. I have to say that the boost to our economy over the weekend was significant – so thank you to the greyhound owners and trainers who spend time and money in our town during the carnival weekend. Also attended the Gold Cup races and the inaugural Raindance – both of which were very successful functions – congratulations to the organisers.

### ***Sponsorship & Financial Assistance Requests***

As usual, the meeting had several requests for financial assistance and I am pleased to say that Councillors were in a generous mood, with the following decisions made:

- i) Coonamble Pre School \$1,000 towards building a verandah.
- ii) Coonamble Branch CWA - \$500 refund of the General Rates portion of its rate account.
- iii) Castlereagh Women’s Rugby League - \$500 sponsorship.
- iv) Castlereagh Trackers Aboriginal Netball - \$500 sponsorship.

### ***Inland Rail – Geotechnical Investigations***

During the coming weeks / months our residents may see geotechnical investigations (test pits and bore holes) being carried out within the Shire’s road reserves. Nine sites have been identified by JacobsGHD it wishes to carry out work in connection with the Narromine to Narrabri section of the inland rail project – Council has given permission for this work to take place.

### ***Coonamble Bore Baths Project***

Following a workshop held in August to progress planning for the proposed bore baths, Council was pleased to have a presentation from Megan Dixon of Regional Development Australia, who was contracted to prepare case studies and undertake a preliminary site assessment. Ms Dixon brought us up to date on progress so far and Council is very happy with how things are going, agreeing to hold a further workshop to discuss planning designs. This is an exciting venture and as it progresses I will keep you all informed.

### ***Acceptance of Tender for Caravan Park Upgrade***

Another bit of exciting news is the acceptance of a tender for the first stage of the upgrade and redevelopment of the Coonamble Riverside Caravan Park. Council accepted the tender submitted by Taylor Made Buildings of Dubbo in an amount of \$407,056.35 to build a residence, office and two x two bedroom cabins. This tender process was contracted to Regional Procurement with input from Council. Hopefully we’ll see work commencing shortly.

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

***Ahmad Karanouh***  
Mayor