



COMMUNITY CONNECT

Coonamble Shire community newsletter for the interest of residents and visitors

July 2019

From the Mayor's Desk



Our July meeting was held on Wednesday 10th – it was exciting to welcome our two new Councillors, Pat Cullen and Barbara Deans. Prior to the commencement of the meeting the new Councillors were obliged to take an oath or make an affirmation in the prescribed form. This being done they were ready to take on their new role.

The result of the Constitutional Referendum was an overwhelming “YES” for nine (9) councillors. This means that when the local government general elections are being held in September 2020, our residents will be voting for nine candidates to serve on Council. I am delighted with the result because I feel there will be less disruption to meetings – it’s not always possible for all councillors to attend every meeting due to personal and business commitments, but with the extra two elected members we won’t run the risk of not having a quorum to function.

The Electoral Commission was contracted by Council to conduct the by-election, including the referendum, which saved our staff precious time. The Commission took care of everything and it’s my opinion that our money was well spent.

During the month I represented Council at several events. The General Manager and I attended the General Assembly of Local Government in Canberra from 16 to 19 June 2019. We had the opportunity to meet with the Hon Mark Coulton MP following the conference and he reiterated his Government’s commitment to funding the Tooraweenah Road upgrade – saying his Department has the process in hand.

I think it is very worthwhile for Councillors to attend conferences and events such as this – it is the greatest way of networking with people trying to achieve the very best for their respective communities. It is always a pleasure to hear the speakers selected – they are of the highest calibre in their field and one always leaves with ideas that often can be put into action.

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

First meeting for new Councillors



The By-election was held on 29 June 2019 and, following Declaration of the Poll on Tuesday 2 July 2019, Coonamble Shire Council has two new Councillors – Mr Pat Cullen, elected No 1 and Mrs Barbara Deans, elected No 2 to fill vacancies created by the death of Cr John Walker and the resignation of Cr Michael Webb.



“I want to congratulate Pat and Barbara and look forward to working with them on the team” Mayor Karanouh said, “I also would like to commend the other two candidates who stood for election, Mrs Marg Garnsey and Mr Mark Vaughan. The result of the by-election was right down to the line which speaks highly of all four candidates”.

Referendum Results

In conjunction with the by-election, Council conducted a Constitutional Referendum, the result was a “Yes” to increase the number of councillors to nine, 1,357 votes to 691 against increasing the number from seven. When voters go to the poll in September 2020 they will be voting for nine candidates to serve from 2020 – 2024.

Stronger Country Communities Round 3

After the success of Round One and Two of the Stronger Country Communities Fund (SCCF), the NSW Government has recently released Round Three. This round will provide funds for regional NSW community projects with a strong focus on youth-related initiatives.

What has changed in Round Three?

This round will dedicate \$50 million to youth-related projects with a focus on young people aged 12-24. The funding body invites applications from councils, but this will be the first time they will accept applications from not-for-profit and community organisations. This round has also been expanded to deliver infrastructure projects but also programs and events.

What does this mean for Coonamble?

Coonamble Shire Council has been advised that the community is eligible for up to \$770,000 worth of funding, half reserved for infrastructure, street beautification, programs and events and the other half for

youth-related projects. Funding applications submitted from either Council or not-for-profit organisations must seek a minimum of \$50,000 per project.

What are the key dates?

Applications opened 9am on 1 July 2019 and close 5pm on Friday 29 September 2019. The assessment period will be between October 2019 and January 2020 and announcement of successful projects will be from January 2020.

Interested in applying?

Further information, guidelines, frequently asked questions, resources and application portal for the SCCF - Round Three can be found online; www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/regional-nsw/regional-growth-fund/stronger-country-communities/

If you would like to discuss a proposed project with Council, please contact Council’s Director Community Services, Ms Robyn Ryan on 02 6827 1900 or email council@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au

Meeting mentions

Coonamble Amateur Theatre Society

The Coonamble Amateur Theatre Society is preparing for the performance of "Robin the Hood", commencing on 31 July for four nights and has requested financial support from Council. CATS produces a play every second year and, in the past, Council has been more than generous with financial support.

When this request was put forward, our General Manager suggested that Council look at formulating a policy that allows Council to deal with requests for financial assistance in a more structured manner. Mr Basson said he would be preparing a draft policy for Council to consider so that applications for financial assistance are considered en masse, rather than on the current ad-hoc basis.

However, with that said, Council felt that it would like to support the local Theatre Society this year and agreed to contribute \$2,000 to offset costs with the production of "Robin the Hood".

Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Policy 2019/2020

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, Council is obliged to provide a policy and set fair and reasonable reimbursement to Councillors during the course of their

duties. The policy is reviewed annually. This updated policy was presented to the meeting and Council must give public notice of its intention to adopt same. The draft policy is now on exhibition, inviting public comment – the closing date to lodge a submission is 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday 6 August.

New Code of Meeting Practice

Council recently adopted a new Code of Meeting Practice which includes the requirement to record meetings of all meetings of which Councillors are members. The meeting had to decide how best to comply, whether just an audio system or go into more expense and provide webcast coverage. Council has \$24,180 in its 2019/20 budget to cover relative costs, however a comment was made that to provide two or three cameras could cost up to \$30,000. It was resolved to install audio equipment from December 2019 for a trial period of six months and then retain the recordings on Council's website for a period of three (3) months. By introducing this trial period, Council will be able to gauge how much interest is being generated and, if there is sufficient interaction, it may be able to consider upgrading the system in the future. In the meantime a significant amount of money will be saved.

Park facelift

Progress on the redevelopment of the Riverside Caravan Park continued with the addition of the new office / residence and the 2 x 2 bedroom cabins, which have now been delivered and installed. The fit-out of these buildings is underway with local tradespeople engaged for the plumbing and electrical components of the project. Mayor Karanouh said "The Director Community Services worked very hard to get these buildings on site and set up and I must congratulate Ms Ryan and her staff for the great result".



Drought Buster Dollars

The Drought Buster Alliance advises the community that the expiration date of the Drought Buster Dollars has been extended until all funds are dispersed. Nomination forms can be found on Council's website; www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au/Community/drought-and-well-being-support

Time to vote

Voting for projects submitted under the My Community Project fund will open 15 July and close 15 August 2019. The power is now in the community's hands to decide which projects they believe should be funded in their electorate. If you would like to vote:

1. Visit the My Community Project homepage and select your electorate; www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/projects-and-initiatives/my-community-project/
2. Log in or create a MyServiceNSW account. If you do not have an account go to; my.service.nsw.gov.au/MyServiceNSW/Register call 13 77 88 or visit the Coonamble Service NSW Centre
3. Verify your identity; you need to be living in NSW, over the age of 16, have a valid Medicare Card, and provide your address
4. Browse the projects and shortlist your favourites
5. Arrange your top 3 to 5 favourite projects, your preferred projects will be given points
6. Submit your vote

Masterplan our vision for the future

At the July meeting, the councillors supported progressing the development of a Coonamble Shire Masterplan by agreeing to call for expressions of interest. The proposed masterplan will provide the framework to deliver coordinated and cohesive infrastructure development to enhance the liveability, sustainability and visual appeal of the Shire. The development and implementation of the masterplan has the capacity to engage, reshape and reinvigorate the community which in turn could encourage new business and residents and expand the tourism sector.

The General Manager will now invite expressions of interest on the brief that has been prepared. The masterplan will provide an overarching plan to ensure a coordinated

and structured strategic planning approach going forward. The successful consultant will work with Council and the community on identifying priority projects; as 'building blocks' to provide for clear future direction.

Council has committed an initial amount of \$30,000 from its Development Fund to develop the masterplan, however, the amount will be re-assessed when expressions of interest have been received. It's an exciting start to a 'work in progress' which, over time, will provide for a strongly themed and branded strategic direction - resulting in Coonamble Shire becoming a destination for visitors and sense of place being enhanced for its residents and rate payers.

FOR INFORMATION

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

Hein Basson
GENERAL MANAGER

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