

From the Mayor's Desk:

Wet weather interrupts a month of activity



I have pleasure in reporting to Council my activities in the role of Mayor since the March 2021 Meeting. A successful Agri-cultural Field Day was held on 13 March where I was able to personally speak with The Hon Mark Coulton

MP on the activities and natural occurrences happening within our local government area. On the following day, the Country Championships Qualifier Races were to be held, with large crowds predicted. Unfortunately, the races were abandoned due to wet weather. The following Tuesday, the horses were able to show their form with a smaller crowd in attendance. Coonamble Jockey Club will get the chance to do it all again with another day of racing being planned.

I had the honour of attending the local round of the Waste to Art Exhibition on 18 March. This competition gives ambitious and skilled artists the opportunity to promote their ideas of waste conservation using artistic talents. One of my responsibilities for the evening was to present the winners with their awards. The standard of artistry and creativity within our local area is to be applauded.

The Challenge and Campdraft Event scheduled for 25 March also had to be postponed due to the weather and the unavailability of stock. An alternative date is to be announced.

Council hosted a sausage sizzle outside its Administration Offices as part of a defibrillator training session offered by personnel from the Coonamble Aboriginal Health Centre and Coonamble Ambulance Service. Council has bought and installed four defibrillators: two at Coonamble and one each at Gulargambone and Quambone. Over the Easter weekend, Coonamble Team Penning and Ranch Sorting Club held a successful event, with competitors drawn from all over NSW. Local participants thankfully took home the blue ribbons.

Earlier in April, Council began its ongoing community consultation about our Artesian Bath project with two days of conversations with consultants. Thank you to all who are sharing views and contributing.

Should anyone wish to contact me to discuss issues or concerns, please phone 0427 887 666.

Ahmad Karanouh
Mayor

Holiday program success

Tie dye, Aboriginal Art and bubble soccer were among the popular activities in the recent school holiday fun program hosted by Coonamble Shire Council.

REDI Youth Centre partnered with Council to host a basketball competition for youth.

A family fun day at Warrena Weir was another of the planned activities. A report on the numbers attending each activity will be presented at Council's May meeting. Each school holiday period, Council organises a free program for children



Hayden Wood, of Dubbo (at top of picture), led an Aboriginal Art workshop as one of the activities in the school holiday program for children of the Coonamble Local Government Area. More than 60 children attended this one activity. Mr Wood helped participants develop their technique to create individual artworks, while he put his skills to work on a large painting depicting the connection between the communities of Coonamble and Gulargambone (held by participants in the centre of the photograph).

Council adopts new water and sewer charges

Council reviewed its water and sewer charges at the April meeting of Council and agreed to increase these to Coonamble residents over the next four years and to Gulargambone residents over the next three years, beginning from July 2021.

Water and sewerage are integral components of the delivery of Council's services to residents of these townships.

The Best-Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Guidelines 2007 require NSW local water utilities to achieve ongoing, full cost recovery for their water supply and sewerage services. This is also a requirement of the National Competition Policy and the National Water Initiative.

The only means available for Councils to achieve this is through annual access charges for water and sewerage and usage fees, both of which are informed by the Water Supply, Sewerage and Trade Waste Pricing Policy Guidelines (issued by the Department of Land and Water Conservation in December 2002).

Full cost recovery involves raising sufficient funds to cover maintenance and administration costs, as well as to cover the expense of the renewal and replacement of

water supply and sewerage infrastructure.

Coonamble Shire Council engaged an independent consultant to look into its water and sewerage systems, who found that Council's current fees and charges are for a level of resourcing not adequate to meet regulatory obligations. It was also found that an increase in charges is needed to ensure the services ongoing operations are not compromised.

Accordingly, Council resolved at its March meeting to increase the water and sewer access fees and usage charges, and upon reconsideration of the matter at its April meeting, decided a schedule that would see a 10% per year increase over the next four years for residents of Coonamble and a comparable increase for users in Gulargambone over three years.

Council is mindful that some residents are confronted with economic challenges, yet it must also responsibly manage the water and sewerage system for all users.

While council has adopted this strategy to achieve the levels of revenue required to improve resourcing and ensure ongoing viability of the water and sewerage systems, periodic reviews will be held.

Draft policy exhibited

Council adopted three revised policies at its April meeting and agreed to exhibit a draft policy and procedure for the operation of mobile food vending vehicles in the local government area.

Members of the public and businesses have until 13 May 2021 to comment on the draft policy and procedure for mobile food vending vehicles. These drafts are available on Council's website and as hard copies at Council's Administration Office, in Coonamble, and at the libraries in Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone.

Council periodically reviews its policies to ensure their compliance and alignment with changes in legislation and community standards and expectations.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Management Plan, the Code of Meeting Practice and Debt Recovery Policy have been revised, while a new Volunteer Policy was adopted after being publicly exhibited.

Sign up for eNotices

Residents can receive their rates notices and water charges by email. Hard copy rates notices will be sent out in the coming weeks.

If you would prefer to receive an eNotice by email, rather than the hard copy, complete the form available towards the bottom of the homepage on Council's website.

You'll need an old rates notice for your:

- Assessment number
- Owner name
- Address of the property
- Lot and DP number

Enter your email and preferred phone contact number, then submit the form.

By registering to receive these notices by email, you can then save, file or print them, and set up a reminder in your calendar or an advanced BPAY payment through your electronic banking.

Rates instalments are due on 31 May, 31 August, 30 November and 28 February of each year. Ratepayers can choose to pay rates in full or by quarterly instalments. Payment methods include paying in person, BPAY, Direct Deposit or by mail.

Please give this option a try, and, if it does not deliver any benefit, you can revert to hard copy receipt of your notices.

Emergency contacts:

Water & Sewerage 0428 217 420

Other Emergencies 0458 271 881

Ranger 0427 255 881

Website for all details:

www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au



The first of the Youth Week activities began with beginner skateboarders standing ready to learn the basics from The Totem Collective instructors.

Focus on activities for youth

A skateboard workshop, outdoor cinema, exercise and nutrition workshops and a creative photo initiative made up activities during Youth Week, supported by funding from Coonamble Shire Council and the NSW Government.

The Totem Collective's skateboard workshops proved so popular during the January school holiday program that they were again called upon to deliver workshops for beginners and more experienced skateboarders at Macdonald Park, Coonamble during Youth Week.

To kick off the workshops, a ceremony was held to unveil a plaque to honour the memory of John 'Bunda' Walker, former Coonamble Shire Councillor, and to acknowledge his contribution to his community.

To engage youth throughout the year, Coonamble Shire Council is re-establishing a Youth Council, with nominations for membership open until 30 April.

The Department of Regional NSW is supporting this initiative with a grant to fund planning workshops and a series of events put forward by the Youth Council.

The Youth Council will meet monthly and act as a forum where members can voice the interests and concerns of young people throughout the local government area.

The time commitment required will be about 1.5 hours a month, along with some strategic thinking at home and attendance at some of the events organised. Ideally, nominees should be available for this first term of service of the Youth Council, through to June 2022.

Nominations are open to all high school-aged people, whether or not they are currently attending school or have completed their schooling. Diversity is encouraged.

The Nomination Form, draft Terms of Reference for the Youth Council, and Youth Council Guideline are available on Council's website (search for 'Youth Council 2021' on the homepage).

Nominations can be submitted to Council's Administration Building at 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble, or at any of our libraries, the Coonamble High School or Gulargambone Central School front offices.

Guidelines for community to consult Council at meetings

Consultation with the community is one of the aspects of Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

Council may hold community consultation at each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items included within the business paper. Community consultation can also be held at extraordinary council meetings.

To speak at community consultation, a

person must first make a formal application to the general manager, using the approved form, by 4.30 pm the day before the date on which the meeting is scheduled, and must identify the subject matter or item of business on the agenda that the person wishes to address, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

Search for 'Code of Meeting Practice adopted April 2021' on Council's website to see the full description of Community Consultation.

Date of June Council meeting postponed one week

Council will delay its June meeting by one week to allow the collation of community responses and feedback to the draft Operational Plan and draft Budget for 2021-22.

Council meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month. The June meeting will be held on Wednesday, 16 June.

The May meeting of Council will consider the

draft Operational Plan and draft Budget 2021-22, which must then be publicly exhibited for 28 days in the interests of open and transparent governance.

The June meeting of Council will adopt the Operational Plan and Budget 2021-22 taking into consideration the sentiments and points raised in the public submissions.

The next Ordinary Meeting of Coonamble Shire Council will be held on Wednesday, 12 May 2021