

From the Mayor's Desk

September 2021

I have pleasure in reporting on my activities in the role of Mayor since the August meeting.

Mental Health

The General Manager and I have discussed the perception that seems to exist that all personal and mental health difficulties that people may have suffered from during the drought have also disappeared after the good rainfall we have thankfully received.

Our community's experience shows this is sadly not the case, and it can take years for some people to regain their balance after having suffered the stresses associated with a prolonged period of adverse conditions.

On our community's behalf, the General Manager has been in contact with the Federal Member for Parkes, the Hon. Mark Coultou, in relation to obtaining a Mental Health Professional to service our Local Government Area.

Mr Coultou has informed Council that the Australian Government is investing \$2.3 billion in the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan—the largest Commonwealth investment in mental health in the country's history.

Mr Coultou advised that the commitment includes creating a landmark national network, including up to 57 additional mental health treatment sites for adults.

The plan will also fund more centres for youth and children through the Head to Health and Headspace programs.

Mr Coultou advised that a \$2.3 billion investment is the first phase of the response to the findings of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into National Suicide Prevention Adviser's Final Advice.

COVID-19 Testing and Vaccination

Our community is to be commended for responding so wholeheartedly to the COVID-19 testing and vaccination clinics that have been held throughout the Local Government Area.

Latest figures suggest that almost 90% of us have had a first vaccination, and more than half of us have had our second vaccination.

The work of the Coonamble Aboriginal Medical Service; Ochre Health Centre; the staff of our Multi-Purpose Centres in Coonamble and Gulargambone; the staff of the Western NSW Local Health District, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and Loxley Health; Coonamble Bowling Club; and Council's own staff in setting up the vaccination clinic at the showground and in coordinating communications is appreciated in helping us achieve such great vaccination levels, for testing us and keeping us as healthy as possible.

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

Ahmad Karanouh
Mayor