

MAYORAL REPORT

Council Meeting:	25 May 2021
Report Date:	24 May 2021
Author:	Mayor
File #:	SC217
Approval:	Mayor

May has been hectic, to say the least.

We have spent a lot of time on the road, and engaged with our representative bodies.

We appeared before the Parliamentary Inquiry into Health Outcomes and Access to Health and Hospital Services in Rural, Regional and Remote New South Wales - in our brief appearance, and the follow up that we have witnessed, it is glaringly apparent that how our health care is delivered, by whom it is delivered, and our equity in this space, all requires serious remodelling - communities outside of metropolitan and regional centres should not carry the burden of disadvantage that many do on a daily basis - all areas of care: Aged, Palliative and Allied Health Care, Medical, Paediatric and the list goes on - financial and human resourcing challenges are the red flags that lead the list of identified areas of urgent concern.

Council facilitated two community meetings - 1 in Darlington Point and 1 in Coleambally - to engage with concerned residents and users of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). Council recognises the level of concern regarding the delivery of these services, particularly community transport, and is working diligently in this space to deliver these services - this will require a lateral mindset that allows us to best use the allocated funding for the maximum output for our people who rely on this service.

The General Manager, Deputy Mayor and I attended the Newell Highway Taskforce Committee Meeting at Parliament House in Canberra on 13 May. We were informed of the proposed works to take place in the imminent future - significant works predominantly to the north are by-passes, linkages to SAP's, overtaking lanes, bridge replacements, flood mitigation and fatigue/rest stops identified - the Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack joined us, and he spoke very clearly to the investment in our major roads and prioritised the "Keeping Our People Safe" message and moving our nation's freight efficiently as a necessary and essential way of keeping rural Australia engaged and sustainable.

The General Manager and I attended a Financial Sustainability Workshop and RAMJO Board Meeting in Deniliquin on 11 and 12 May 2021. What is clearly evident is the disconnect between the expectation and productivity that RAMJO delivers in spades and the gross underfunding that the Office of Local Government deems appropriate.

RAMJO is touted as the model that the Office of Local Government wish for all Joint Organisations. RAMJO not only services and advocates for its 11 member Councils, at this stage it is also overseeing the Far West Joint Organisation (FWJO) - Brotherhood is the only way we, in Local Government, will survive. But stretching our limited human resources to breaking point is not good business and not sustainable long term.

The JO model is a great model - RAMJO have proven that with good leadership you can get "stuff" done - but to underfund a legislated initiative is setting us up to fail. Again our local Councils are picking up the pieces, but we have a limited amount to contribute.

RAMJO and its member Councils will need a very loud voice in this space to ensure our longevity.

The General Manager and I attended the 77th Murray Darling Association Conference in Wentworth on the 17, 18 and 19 May 2021.

This is an amazing part of the world situated at the confluence of the Darling and Murray Rivers.

Our conference speakers included Federal and State politicians in the Water Space, Productivity Commissioner, BOM, Local Government, NSW Irrigators Council, WNSW, tourism advocates, research and water scientists, DPIE Water, The Alluvium Group, CWEO, Climate Change PhD /Modellers, Our Cultural/Heritage, Angus Houston, and Interim Inspector General Water Compliance, Troy Grant.

The message is clear - there is no more new water - we need to ensure that we best use what we have - however the need or greed, depending on your point of view, has to be managed - compliance and a managed market will go a long way towards making this a reality and ensuring that our communities, our environment and our productivity/economy all have a place with a future

Our Council staff are working diligently preparing our Budget Papers and progressing a template for the rollout of the Rates Harmonisation Model - This is a really challenging space and it behoves us all to read and re-read what is provided to us so we are best informed moving forward.

Council is very much engaged in major projects, and to see them progressing is very rewarding, with many more projects to come. The continuing funding opportunities coming our way have Council well placed to avail ourselves of this welcome and community building opportunity.

I had the pleasure of attending the Graduation Ceremony at Tirkandi Inaburra, and was able to congratulate not only the boys that embraced this programme, and had done so well, but the staff who made this unique opportunity available to them in collaboration with the RFS - the Brewarrina RFS worked collaboratively with Tirkandi and the result was amazing.

There are information webinars available to all Councillors regarding our Electoral responsibilities, both financially and personally. I encourage you all to

avail yourselves of these information sessions - they are informative and clearly state the requirements for the Elections on 4 September, 2021.

Below are a list of meetings I have attended in May

28 April 2021

LHAC - Health Meeting, Jerilderie

29 April 2021

Parliamentary Inquiry into Health Outcomes and Access to Health and Hospital Services in Rural, Regional and Remote New South Wales, Deniliquin

3 May 2021

Sussan Ley Visit - Jerilderie Long Day Care Centre Meeting and catch up with Mayor and GM

4 May 2021

Mid Murrumbidgee Wetlands Tour Narrandera and Leeton

5 May 2021

1- CHSP Meetings- Community Transport

Darlington Point and Coleambally

2- Mayor, Deputy Mayor, GM and Director of Infrastructure Meeting

Workshop and Council Business Paper discussions

Coleambally

3- Meeting with The Sweatbox Gym Committee

Coleambally

6 May 2021

1-Director of Planning and Community Interview

Darlington Point

2- Tirkandi Inaburra - RFS Graduation Ceremony

Coleambally

3- CERC Meeting

Coleambally

7 May 2021

1- Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting, Jerilderie

2- Official Opening of the new Elders Office at Oaklands Road, Jerilderie

10 May 2021

Meeting with Sue Mitchell -CHSP Way Forward, Darlington Point

11/12 May 2021

RAMJO Financial Sustainability Workshop and Board Meeting, Deniliquin

13 May 2021

Newell Highway Taskforce Committee Meeting, Canberra

14 May 2021

RAMJO Water Sub Committee Meeting via Zoom

17/18/19 May 2021

Murray Darling Association Meeting /Conference, Wentworth

20 May 2021

BFMC Meeting - RFS Mid Murray Zone, Deniliquin

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. K. McRae". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot at the end.

Ruth McRae

MAYOR