

Message from the Mayor

What welcome and timely rain we have received regionally! It was appreciated by one and all - particularly our agricultural sector that underpins our regional economy.

We've now settled into COVID-19 life and become accustomed to the many changes and challenges that have been thrust upon us. Whilst life has presented many hurdles, we only have to look at our fellow humans on a global scale to realise we are managing well.

And so to all of you - our staff, our Councillors and every one of our community members - I commend you for stepping up to the mark, for working hard to ensure our essential services are being delivered, for adopting the "village" model of looking out for our most vulnerable, and for working so hard to adapt to life during COVID-19.

Particularly now we have some relaxation to the rules, now is not the time to become complacent. Vigilance will ensure our good health and well-being now and in the coming months.

It is indeed challenging and there are some significant hurdles, but if we can stay positive, we will prevail.

My heart goes out to businesses forced to close, those that have lost their jobs, and those doing it tough. However, with adversity comes innovation, and I congratulate those local businesses who have implemented new measures and diversified their products to provide for COVID-19 demands. Coleambally firm Pumps, Pipes & Power is just one example, with the firm producing clear safety screens for reception areas.

We at Council have also had to make many changes and our staff have worked extremely hard to ensure we can maintain as many services as possible.

Our indoor staff are working from home and our outdoor staff are continuing in their roles following strict COVID-19 rules and guidelines. I thank the staff for their dedication and diligence, ably led by General Manager, John Scarce.

You will see that around each of the towns the major works are progressing well and each of these will be a fantastic asset to the community when completed.

We have the \$1.96 million swimming pool at Jerilderie and the \$1.2 million boat ramp at Darlington Point. Work will begin in a couple of months on the Coleambally Sports Precinct as it is now out to tender.

The economic impacts have been and will continue to be far reaching. Local councils have also felt the impacts and the NSW Government recognised this with the Local Government Stimulus Package. This will be invaluable in ensuring we can retain our staff and remain sustainable into the future.

We are also committed to assisting our community where we can and have adopted COVID-19 Hardship Policy to assist our ratepayers. I urge you to contact our team if you are facing hardship and unable to pay your rates or charges. We'll work through the problem together.

I also urge you to seek help and support if ever you or someone you know feels unable to cope.

Together we will get through this and together we'll be stronger on the other side.

Kind regards,