

From the Mayor's Desk:

Congratulations to winners of Australia Day awards



The first Council meeting for 2021 was held on Wednesday 10 February.

Prior to reporting on my activities over the past month, I offer my personal congratulations to the winners of the Australia Day

Awards at both Coonamble and Gulargambone. I also commend those who made the effort to nominate all the worthy nominees – well done to all! Council staff organised a great morning of celebration at the Showground, followed in the afternoon with free fun at the pool.

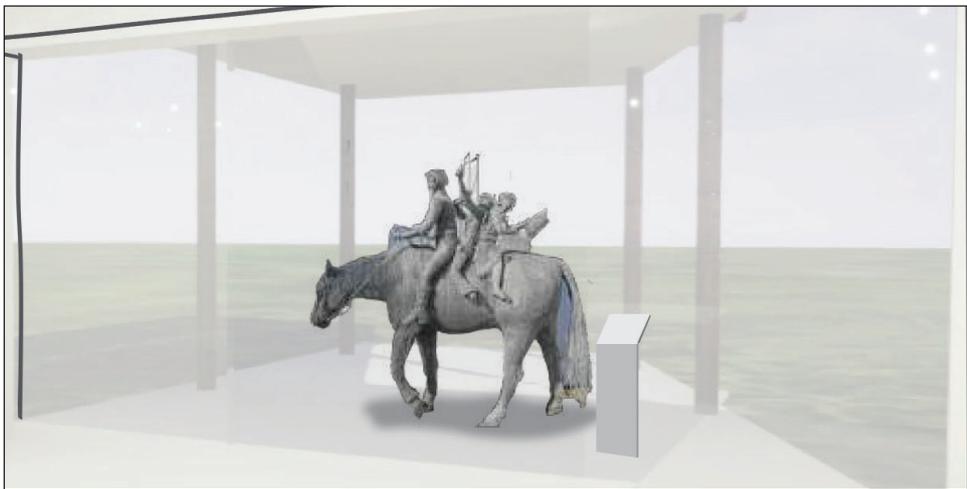
Following the presentation from Ochre Health at the December meeting, the General Manager and I met with representatives of the Western NSW Local Health District earlier in the month to further discuss health services which will be available to the community following the acceptance of the tender by Ochre Health and other health related issues.

Five of Council's long serving staff were invited to lunch on meeting day to honour their loyal commitment and dedication to service. Those employees were Steven Smith (40 years); Vicky Fulmer (30 years); Jenny Langlands (30 years); Raquel Pickering (20 years) and Andrew Morley (20 years). On behalf of Council and management I personally thank and congratulate these people and trust they continue to serve their community in the various roles they undertake with Council.

I was saddened to learn of the recent death of Mrs Lilliane Brady OAM, the long serving Mayor of Cobar Shire Council. Mrs Brady was in her 90th year and still going strong. Ironically, it was only a week or so ago that she featured in the ABC documentary Back Roads Cobar which, I believe, was filmed late last year. A tribute well deserved and, as a mark of respect, Council stood in one minute's silence to remember a wonderful ambassador for her community, the Western Region and for everything local government represents. Council sends its most sincere condolences to her family.

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

Ahmad Karanouh
Mayor



Brian Campbell's 'School Bus' sculpture will be a prominent visual feature in the new Visitor Information Centre.

VIC interior display provider conditionally approved

Council has conditionally accepted a quotation for work on the interior exhibition and display areas of the new Coonamble Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Smith Park.

Council is undertaking referee confirmation that the preferred tender has successfully delivered projects of comparable scale and scope, and that it has the financial capacity to undertake the work.

Building work on the new Visitor Information Centre is scheduled to be completed mid-year, with interior exhibition space expected to be fitted out over the subsequent month.

The preferred submission proposed a photographic timeline of the history of the Local Government Area and the prominent placement of Brian Campbell's *School Bus* sculpture so that it is visible as soon as visitors enter the centre.

A floor-to-ceiling digital screen, a digital map, displays of local produce and merchandise and gallery space for a variety of displays and exhibitions are other elements.

Aboriginal cultural heritage and the area's more recent agricultural and pastoral heritage will be featured in the display space.

Elections scheduled for September

Coonamble voters will go to the ballot on 4 September this year to elect nine people to serve as Coonamble Shire Council—up from the current seven-member Council of the past.

The NSW Government postponed the election for a year in the interests of public safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those considering election in September should keep in mind that they do not need any formal qualifications and will receive training, support, expenses and fees if elected.

Electoral rolls close at 6pm on 26 July 2021. Candidates can be nominated during the one-week period between 27 July to midday on 4 August.

Registration of electoral material closes at

5pm on 27 August. After the election on 4 September, results will be progressively announced from 7 September.

For women interested in running for election, a free workshop will be held in Dubbo on Saturday, 1 May, from 10am to 4pm, covering your obligations as a candidate, the role of the councillor and knowing why you want to run for election. It will explain how to plan your campaign and how to deal with the important six weeks before the election. Further details are available at: wfea.org.au.

People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent are also encouraged to consider standing for election.

For helpful information, visit: www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/councillors.

Help promote Coonamble's big weekend in March

Coonamble Ag Field Day, the *Cuisine on Castlereagh* evening event and the horse racing industry's Western Country Championships Qualifier come together on the weekend of 13 and 14 March to make it a busy weekend on the Coonamble social calendar.

You can play your part by inviting your country cousins and city friends to join in the events of the weekend.

There are hotel and motel accommodation options, as well as room for caravans and camping in Coonamble and Gulargambone.

The Three Rivers Machinery Ag Field Day will be held on Saturday, 13 March, from 8.30am at Coonamble Showground.

The latest in agricultural machinery, equipment, services and technology will be showcased at this event. Food, art and craft exhibitors will also take part.

No need to worry about cooking that evening either. *Cuisine on Castlereagh* is a new council-led event, funded by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to help increase the use of local economic centres by the public.

Cuisine on Castlereagh will centre on delivery of a variety of cuisines between 5pm and 8pm, in Castlereagh Street, Coonamble, supported by some craft stalls and local businesses that will re-open during the evening hours. Kick on into the evening at The Bucking Bull, The 'Termo', Coonamble Bowling Club or Coonamble Golf Club.

Coonamble Jockey Club hosts the Western Country Championships Qualifier on Sunday, 14 March, with \$150,000 prize money for each of the races on the seven-race card. An eighth 'Wild Card' race, worth \$50,000, will provide one more opportunity for horses from previous heats to qualify for the final.

Tickets for the Country Championships will be available from 123tix.com.au.



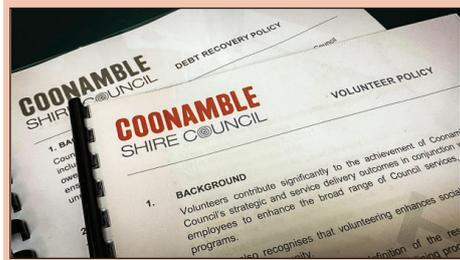
Sports Ground lighting upgrade progresses

Work to install new lighting for Coonamble Sports Ground has begun, with the contractor working with Council staff last week to mark out all underground services.

Replacement of the old timber poles with concrete poles to support new lighting, a public address system and power outlets is funded by a \$1 million grant from the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, under the Drought Communities Program.

This grant also covers upgrading of the playing field surface, painting of the grandstand, painting the canteen, upgrade of perimeter fencing, replacement of bins.

Passers-by will notice trenches for conduit being dug and backfilled each day as work is undertaken to install the new concrete poles and lighting. Council has written to sporting groups affected by the work, thanking them for their patience while work proceeds.



Draft policies on display

Council invites submissions from the wider community in response to its draft Volunteer Policy and draft Debt Recovery Policy.

Council developed the proposed Volunteer Policy in recognition of the significant contribution of volunteers to the broad range of services, projects and programs it provides.

The draft Debt Recovery Policy was developed to improve management of the recovery of outstanding rates, user charges and sundry income through greater consistency, fairness, integrity and confidentiality. It should be read in conjunction with a number of other documents, including the Financial Hardship Policy, adopted at Council's February meeting.

Council resolved at its February meeting to exhibit the draft policies from 17 February to 18 March.

Submissions will be accepted up to 5pm on Thursday, 18 March 2021.

The draft policy documents are available for viewing on Council's website and as hard copies at Council's Administration Office in Coonamble, Coonamble Library, Gulargambone Library, Gulargambone Rural Transaction Centre and the Quambone Store.

Water restrictions continue

Restrictions on the use of fixed hoses and sprinklers to the hours between 7pm and 7am remain in place for Coonamble.

Council is required to impose restrictions on fixed hoses and sprinklers to ensure sufficient treated water remains in water towers for more essential household use during periods of high demand.

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

Public art town entrances program underway

Progress has begun on the public art entrance signage and sculptures for Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone.

Artists are working in each town to create unique bird sculptures and to design town entrance signage.

This is a community led project.

Local artists, metal fabricators, concrete suppliers and people who 'just get things done' are welcome to contribute.

If you have skills to contribute or questions about the project, please contact council by email at council@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 6827 1900.

Call for providers to register in local services directory

Home maintenance and lawn maintenance providers in Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone are invited to submit their information for inclusion in a directory of service providers.

Council often receives requests from homeowners or landowners living outside the shire, asking for contact details of peo-

ple who could undertake small maintenance jobs or mow lawns.

Council requests service providers submit their names, a description of their services, areas they serve, contact details and an ABN (if available).

They will be listed alphabetically in the proposed service directory.