



District Council of Cooper Pedy Newsletter

Welcome to the Opal Capital of the World

July 2020

Message from the Administrator

Welcome to the July edition of Council's newsletter. I trust that you find it interesting and informative.

Tim Jackson
Administrator
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0417 016 161

Water

An article in a recent edition of the Cooper Pedy Regional Times suggested that SA Water had declined to take over Cooper Pedy's water. This is incorrect. For the record, the decision is not one that will be made by SA Water. The State Government will make the decision. No decision has been made yet. The Government is in receipt of the report prepared by SA Water on the future water supply requirements of Cooper Pedy. It is the most comprehensive report ever done on the Cooper Pedy water issue. It was done at the request of the Council. It was funded by the State Government.

The Cooper Pedy Administrator recently met with the relevant State Government Minister, Stephan Knoll. The outcome of this meeting was that extensive negotiations are required and consequently adequate time needs to be set aside for this to happen. In due course this matter will need to go to State Cabinet for a decision.

The SA Water's estimated replacement cost for the system is substantially more than the Council's estimate of \$10 million. Consequently, the Council does not have the financial capacity to fund it. Options are for the State Government to provide substantial funding to the Council or for it to provide substantial funding to SA Water to enable it to take the system over.

The Cooper Pedy Deal

As part of the meeting with Minister Knoll regarding water - refer to previous article - the Administrator stressed to the Minister that a package of measures were needed to ensure the future of the town and the Council. The Minister recognised the importance of this particularly having regard to Cooper Pedy's unique circumstances and the fact that it is the capital of South Australia's Far North. It was also agreed that the measures needed to be identified and addressed as soon as possible. The Minister proposes to be directly involved in these negotiations.

Rating

Councils have a variety of options available to them when designing their systems to levy municipal rates to maintain and develop their Council areas.

The system in Cooper Pedy could only be described as unnecessary complicated. A proposal to simplify the system will be consulted on as part of the Council's annual planning process in the next month.

It is important to stress that this review is about how municipal rates are levied, not the amount that is raised. As a result of the poll conducted last year, the amount of rates will only increase by more than the CPI if approved at a poll of voters. No poll is proposed this year therefore rates will not increase by more than the CPI.

CEO Oversight Committee

The Committee had its first meeting in June. The meeting primarily focused on establishing the Committee. The remaining vacancy on the Committee will be advertised shortly.

Freedom of Information Fees

At a recent meeting, Council resolved to waive all FOI fees to a maximum of \$1,000 in any twelve month period. If the estimated cost of providing documents under FOI exceeds \$1,000 Council will

ask for the excess to be paid in advance. It is important to note that FOI applicants must identify the documents that they are seeking. FOI is not about seeking answers to questions - it is about the discovery of actual documents.

Stuart Range - Correction from the last Newsletter

The last Newsletter contained an update on the proposed development at the Stuart Range resort. The article stated, "Council has already spent \$169,000 in legal fees as a result of the former Council's decision to defend the matter." Council would like to clarify that the "former Council" refers to the Council that was in place from November 2014 to November 2018. Stuart Range recently submitted a new application for a petrol station. At the meeting on 23 June, Council resolved to refer the application to the Minister for Planning to have the Development Assessment Commission declare the relevant authority. The Development Application Number is 691/16/20 and it may be viewed at the Council office during normal business hours.

Youth Shed

Council is pleased to announce that it and Aboriginal Family Support Services (AFSS) have signed a licence agreement to share use of the Youth Shed. Council's Children and Parenting program continues to use the shed in the mornings and AFSS will use the Shed in the afternoons. We are excited to see the Shed used by all our youth in Cooper Pedy and we look forward to continuing our collaboration in the future. For Youth Shed activities and times please contact Dominique Barry on (08) 8672 3066.

Cooper Pedy Gymnasium

At the last Council meeting, a question was asked about the re-opening of the gym. The Cooper Pedy Regional Sports and Recreation Association runs the gym, and it uses the change





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rooms at the recreation reserve under a licence agreement with Council. The licence expired three years ago. Council is in negotiations with the Association to renew the licence, and we expect that the gym will re-open soon. The gym was closed as part of the nationwide Covid-19 restrictions. Naturally, the updated social distancing measures applicable to gyms will apply.

Traffic Speed - Area School

Council has been previously advised of the receipt of correspondence from the Cooper Pedy Area School Governing Council and the school principal requesting speed humps in Paxton Road as well as the request for attention to speeding at and in the carpark off Cameron Drive.

Paxton Road Speed Humps

For the following reasons, Council is required to comply with Code of Practice AS 1742 when installing traffic control devices in streets:

- If the compliance criteria are not met, Council may become liable in the event of an accident if it was found that the installation has contributed to the accident.
- It is illegal to install devices in streets that do not comply and are not approved. The compliance and design criteria are strictly policed by the delegate of the Minister of Transport where the installations are on public land near schools.

Traffic speed and design data is required to assist in the determination of the compliance with the code. The data collected shows that in Paxton Road over 85% of the traffic exceeds the speed limit during school operation and when children are present. The median speed is approximately 33kph. The volume of speeding vehicles has met the code criteria triggering consideration of control measures. The design would require two sets of controls at a spacing of 80m to 100m

to comply with the code requirements if humps were to be installed.

Cost and Funding of Installations

Council has a number of options available if it was to construct the humps. Each option will require kerbing protruberances on the residential property side of the road to avoid vehicles bypassing the installation via the footpath.

The estimated cost of the various methods of construction including signage is approximately \$20,000.

The options are:

1. To construct humps using concrete block pavers (2.7m x the width of the road) at an estimated cost of \$10,000 per installation including kerb protruberance.
2. To construct humps using concrete to the required design profile (2.7m x width of road) at cost of approximately \$8,000 per installation.
3. To construct squash humps using rubberized or PVC panels as pre-fabricated units bolted to the road

with earth anchors at a cost of \$8,000 each.

Humps cannot be constructed using hot mix bitumen because hot mix is not available.

Cameron Drive Carpark and Adjacent Roadway

The parties raised two different concerns:

1. The speed of traffic through the carpark.

Cameron Drive carpark is owned by the State Government and is the responsibility of the Department for Education. The carpark is a rubble carpark.

It is the understanding of the author that there is a desire by the committee to restrict the speed of traffic in the carpark using some form of speed hump at the entrance and exit or mid-block in the carpark, or the closure of an entrance to restrict through traffic. Council approval is not required. The school could contract this work to an independent contractor. Council is able to undertake the work as

SEASIDE VETERINARY SURGERY is visiting Cooper Pedy

NEXT VISIT: 17th, 18th 19th August 2020

All small animal services will be catered for including desexings, vaccinations and health checks.

Please call 0474 654 721 to make an appointment or email. Include: Your name and address, Pet name, breed, age and reason for visit.

info@seasidevet.com.au

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE VETS ARRIVAL TO ENSURE THE VET WILL BE VISITING AND TO SECURE AN APPOINTMENT





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a contractor.

2. The speed of traffic at the pedestrian crossing on Cameron Drive.

Speed counts on Cameron Drive show the speeds are generally satisfactory for a pedestrian crossing. To achieve lower speeds a range of options could be considered. Each of the options must comply with the Code of Practice AS 1742, and include:

1. Raised pavement markers in the centre of the road forcing a degree of caution to the movement of traffic. Normally the installation is coupled with a safety zone refuge for pedestrians in the median of the road. The cost is approximately \$2,000; or
2. A raised platform at the pedestrian crossing coupled with a pedestrian refuge in the median at a cost of approximately \$6,000.

Council has not budgeted for the traffic control in Paxton Road or Cameron Drive. The approximate cost of the Paxton Road control is \$20,000 and up to \$2,000 for the Cameron Drive safety bar option and \$6,000 for the raised plateaux option. These items will need to be considered in Council's 2020/21 Budget.

Extensive consultation is required for the Paxton Road speed humps proposal and this is proposed through letterbox and through community meetings.

Community News

From the August edition of this newsletter, there will be a section for Community News. If your club, association, organisation or community group has an event, news or announcement that you would like citizens to know about, please forward this to the newsletter editor, Jill Maden (jmaden@cpcouncil.sa.gov.au) by the cut off dates listed:

Edition	Cut Off Date
August	7 August 2020
September	4 September 2020
October	9 October 2020
November	6 November 2020
December	4 December 2020

Letter to the Editor of the Cooper Pedy Regional Times

We find it again necessary to correct numerous aspects of an article that appeared in the 10th July edition of the Cooper Pedy Regional Times.

The paper provided an extract from the 2017/18 auditor's report. The question the paper needs to answer is, "Why did the article only focus on the 2017/18 audit report?". The 2018/19 audit report was considered at the same Council meeting. The 2018/19 audit report found that eight of the nine audit risks were found to be satisfactory.

Another question the paper needs to answer is, "Why didn't it mention that the audit of the 2018/19 financial statements was the first time in five years that the auditor didn't qualify his opinion? Auditors qualify financial statements when they cannot be certain the financial statements reflect the financial position of the organisation being audited.

We look forward to answers to these questions being published in the next edition of the Cooper Pedy Regional Times.

The article also focused on the CEO's decision to withdraw a financial report to the Council. The CEO acknowledged at the meeting that the report was deficient. The deficiencies were discovered after the Agenda had been posted on Council's website and before the meeting. There was no justification or need to remove the report from the Agenda before the meeting. The newspaper correctly reported that the financial report had not been considered by the Audit Committee. It is pref-

erable for the Audit Committee to review financial reports before being considered by Council, and this will occur whenever practicable.

The article states that the Administrator is able to report confidentially to the Local Government Minister. While this is true, all reports to the Minister in the last six months have been tabled in an open Council meeting.

The Council is pleased that these matters are being covered but we ask for accurate and balanced reporting. The Cooper Pedy Regional Times never checks the accuracy of information it intends to use about Council matters, nor does it provide the Council with an opportunity to comment prior to publication.

In a letter to the editor published in the same edition, Mr Des Roffey wrote that Mr Alan Rushbrook, in questions from the floor, stated, "and that money would be exhausted before the end of June". Mr Roffey implied that Mr Rushbrook advised that Council would run out of money by the end of June. No such statement was made at the meeting on the 26 May 2020. At the meeting there was a clear and lengthy explanation given in response to Mr Roffey's questions regarding Council's cash position and its cash management processes, including contingencies Council had put in place to ensure that it had sufficient cash to continue to operate until the end of June 2020.

A letter to the editor from Mr Brett Trueman published on 26 June 2020, said, "Recently the DCCP waived c. \$1.8M in unpaid electricity and water charges racked up by a local organisation." This statement is categorically untrue. Council wrote off \$30,000 in relation a large number of debtors.

A letter to the editor from G. Pavlidis asked what type of local produce would be of-





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ferred for sale at the Visitor Information Centre. Council's Tourism Committee, which oversees the operation of the Centre, has not made a decision on this yet, except to say the Centre will not be selling opals.

Tim Jackson
Administrator

Cooper Pedy Regional Times Fake News

Fact Check # 1

"Meeting cancelled by the DCCP without consultation with the organisers." (Cooper Pedy Regional Times)

Fact:

It was not Council's meeting to cancel. The meeting was cancelled by the Cooper Pedy Regional Times because the guest speaker chose to decline the invitation.

Fact Check # 2

"Cancelled Amidst Council Meddling" (Cooper Pedy Regional Times)

Fact:

See Fact Check # 1

Fact Check # 3

"Cooper Pedy Orchard Neglected and Dying Again" (Cooper Pedy Regional Times)

Fact:

The oval and orchard are irrigated with treated waste water with the oval receiving an occasional weekly top up of drinking water if waste water supply is insufficient. Eight thousand and eight kl (cubic Meters) of treated waste water has been applied to the oval and the orchard and native tree plantation in the last three months using underground irrigation on the oval and drippers in the orchard and native tree reserve. The triangle which includes the orchard and the native tree reserve and oval receives approximately 100 kl (cubic meters) per watering cycle per day with 40 kl applied to the deciduous trees and ol-

ive grove and 60 kl to irrigate the oval. The article in the Cooper Pedy Regional Times implied that the trees were losing their leaves because they are not irrigated. This is untrue. It is important to note that the pistachios and some fruit such as pears are dormant in winter and that is why they lose their leaves. The following extract from a professional article supports the deciduous physiology of the pistachio; "The pistachio tree is deciduous, so it loses its leaves in the fall (winter) and remain dormant through the winter. The rooting habit of the tree is classified as a phreatophyte. Phreatophytes have extensive root systems allowing them to mine the soil deeply. Thus, pistachios are adapted to survive long periods of drought." Ref: *The Pistachio Tree; Botany and Physiology and Factors that Affect Yield* by Louise Ferguson, Vito Polito and Craig Kallsen.

Fake News Tally - July 2020

	True	False
CPRT	0	3

Service Contact Numbers

Administration Office
(08) 8672 4600

Mini Gems Children's Centre
(08) 8672 4623

Library
(08) 8672 4635

Electricity, Water, Works Depot
(08) 86724 626

On Call Numbers
Aerodrome
0400 108 230

Dog Control
0408 693 672

Electricity
0417 814 617

Water
0417 811 470

