



This newsletter will in future be produced monthly after the second Council meeting of the month. Its purpose is to communicate what the Council has done and what it is proposing to do.

The Council meeting held last week was well attended. The interaction with those present was great.

Town Meetings will be held monthly in future on fourth Tuesday. I encourage you to attend.

I am required to report quarterly to the Minister for Local Government on how things are going. I took the opportunity to get in early and provided him with an update late last month. While I raised many issues with him I placed great emphasis on the water issue.

It is evident to me that there is no clear direction for the town. We desperately need a Town Plan. This would be a plan for the town not a plan for the Council. It would deal with issues like health, education, housing, law and order etc. as well as municipal services. We will over the next few weeks be asking you whether this is a good idea.

The issue of water is one of the biggest issues confronting the town. The continuity of supply is challenging and significant progress has been made in the last week in terms of finding leaks.

The lack of equity in terms of water pricing and funding is a fundamental issue for Coober Pedy. I have written to the Water Minister about this and hopefully I will meet with him in coming weeks. Getting resolution of this issue is critical in terms in terms of the future financial viability of the Council and the financial impact on consumers.

As you would know we have had an acting CEO for almost a year. The recruitment of an ongoing CEO will commence early next month. Attracting a quality field of candidates is never easy in remote areas and when you add the recent negative publicity about the Council it makes it even harder.

The consultation on the proposed location or locations for recreational vehicle parking has certainly generated some debate. This is good. While the consultation has been on the location it has generated views that it should not happen at all particularly in the town. At this stage I have a totally open mind on the subject.

As most of you would be aware the bank was closed for four days last week. Perhaps one or maybe two days are understandable but four is not acceptable. We raised this issue with the State Manager this week in a video conference and he agreed. As part of the same conference we raised the issue of bank closures and were given undertaking that no closure was planned for Coober Pedy.

Until next time.
Tim Jackson
Administrator
0417 016 161



District Council of Coober Pedy Newsletter

Welcome to the Opal Capital of the World

March 2019

Public Forum and Meeting Program

Each month a public forum will be held to enable a Questions & Answer session to be held. The program for the for the council meetings up to June allows for public forums to be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise notified.

Financial Sustainability of Your Council

The council has been operating financially unsustainably for at least seven years due to poor budgeting and financial control. This has necessitated progressive borrowing to cover the deficit each year resulting in an accumulated debt of \$ 7.00 mill and potentially rising to \$9.00 mill to cover the outstanding EDL bill. The path to return to financial sustainability is difficult. Council are working on long term financial strategies to assist the community to consider a number of routes to financial sustainability. We encourage your participation in this journey and we urge your attendance at the public forums and council meetings where the options are to be discussed. Ultimately the council would like general agreement in the community on the principles of the path going forward. One of the serious issues is the cost of water in Coober Pedy vs the water cost to the remainder of the state. Council have requested the Water Minister subsidised Coober Pedy water rates to the

same extent as the remainder of the state as follows;
Coober Pedy rates = Coober Pedy water production cost less the equivalent subsidy to regional SA
(The proper Coober Pedy water rate would equate with Adelaide water charges)
The subsidy would have a significant effect on the council's financial sustainability.

Audit committee

With the consent of the audit committee there has been a significant change to the functions of the audit committee to know Governance. The committee will be meeting monthly to reflect the importance of providing guidance and professional advice on the crucial issues of financial sustainability and governance. Members of the public are invited to observe these meetings each month.

Bad Debt

There has been accumulated debt develop due to unpaid electricity, water and sewerage charges. This has in part is being addressed using the following techniques.

- Where hardship exists a repayment plan has been negotiated. The policy is on our web site.
- Where no hardship exists a series of warning notices followed by legal action.
- Resuming the property for sale is the last resort.
- Referring the matter to

the water and electricity Ombudsman for a negotiated settlement.

- Writing off the debt where the property owner is deceased or cannot be found or is unlikely to ever repay the debt .The write off in the case of electricity is fully compensated by the State Government.

Road Reconstruction

Tenders are currently being evaluated for the largest single injection of 4.7 Mil to upgrade our roads.

The work is anticipated to commence in 4 weeks

CEO Replacement

THE procedures necessary for the CEO replacement since the resignation of Fiona Hogan have been put in place.

Orchard Sustainability and street tree condition

The orchard is irrigated along with treed landscape with treated sewerage water. The supply is only marginally meeting the demands of the orchard and treed landscape. The water shortage, poor dripper maintenance and historically poor brush cutting has resulted in some tree deaths and tree stress. Additional effort encouraged by community action is being put in to save the trees where feasible.



District Council of Cooper Pedy Newsletter

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Water sustainability

The recent publicity surrounding the issue of water leakage due to pipe system failure has raised the profile of the community's interest in the observation of wet areas. One such observation of a small wet area has led to a discovery of a large leak and this has now brought the water balance almost under control. We urge the community to continue to report these wet areas.

Programmed repair of the pipes is clearly not a long term solution to the problem. Council has appealed to State and

Commonwealth Governments to take notice of our grant applications to fund the renewal of the pipe network and other assets which are in a poor condition. Grant applications have apparently been ranked lower than other supposedly more salubrious options and are clearly less important than the water supply of Cooper Pedy.

Westpac Bank

Recent communication by the Administrator relating to the temporary closure of the bank resulted in a meeting between the Administrator the

Acting CEO and bank senior management and has resulted in an assurance (contrary to rumour) that the Westpac bank is to remain open into the foreseeable future.

Town Plan

The Administrator has expressed the view that a community discussion about the potential to develop a town plan covering all aspects of the social environmental and economic development of the town are explored. Community feedback on this proposal will be sought.

To Our Valued Customers.....

NOTICE OF POWER INTERRUPTION

DATE: 4TH APRIL 2019 (Thursday)

TIME: 9:00AM to 3:00PM

AREAS AFFECTED:

Allen Dr	Jewellers Shop Rd
Aston Rd	Jungle Cr
Attwood Rd	Kami Rd
Boulder Ave	Kingsford Smith Ct
Carols Rd	Ledgard Rd
Clarky Rd	Matrix Ave
Comacchio Cl	Potch Gully Rd
Conly Pl	Potch Pl
Crows Rd	Southern Cross Dr
Eagle Cr	St Elijah Dr
German Gully Rd	Santing Dr
Harlequin Dr	William Creek Rd
Helmis St	Wilson Rd
Jelly Cr	Woolaston Rd

CUT OFF POINT: Lot 2015 Jewellers Shop Rd (noodling area)

PURPOSE: Replacement of damaged high voltage power pole on Matrix Ave

NOTICE OF POWER INTERRUPTION

DATE: 9TH APRIL 2019 (Tuesday)

TIME: 9:00AM to 5:00PM

AREAS AFFECTED:

Airport Rd	Lindeman Dr
Amorosi Dr	Linsky Dr
Beadell Cl	Marsh Pl
Black Peter Rd	McCormack Rd
Blakeley Rd	Mudge Ct
Boland Rd	Nikoloudis Dr
Collins Cl	North West Ridge Rd
Crismani Cl	Rowdy Ln
Flat Hill Rd	Rowe Dr
Flats Dr	Ryans Hill Rd
Freer Ct	Seventeen Mile Rd
German Hill Rd	Shooters Club Rd
Hall Dr	Stingas Rd
Hamilton Pde	Stuart Hw
High St	The Miners Way
Hopeful Hills Rd	Thrower Cl
Hyatt Rd	Tomcat Hill Rd
Ice Cream Hill Rd	Tupper Cl
Judd Pde	Underwood Cr

CUT OFF POINT: Lot 1308 Seventeen Mile Road

PURPOSE: Installation of high voltage switches & removal of redundant infrastructure

Please note that electricity supply will be restored as soon as the aforementioned activity has been completed.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Electricity Distribution Manager for more information

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