



MAYOR SPEARHEADS PLAN TO BRING NRL MATCH TO DUBBO

Dubbo Regional Council will investigate the potential to host an NRL match in the next three years after a Mayoral Minute was unanimously endorsed at the May Ordinary meeting of Council on Monday night.

Mayor of the Dubbo Region Ben Shields said he felt hosting a regular season game would be an effective way of helping the region's economy recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Dubbo has a proven record of drawing crowds for NRL matches so the support is there, and with people likely to come from all over Western NSW, it would be fantastic for our cafes, restaurants, pubs and accommodation providers. It would also give our retail industry a much needed boost," Councillor Shields said.

"However it would be much more than a one-off economic boost. The promotion of the Dubbo Region through the media in the lead up to the game and broadcast of the match would have long-lasting effects for our region."

Recommendations from the Mayoral Minute included conducting research within the community to gauge the desire for an NRL match and conducting a cost-benefit analysis, as well as the exploration of government funding options.

Contact will be made with the NRL with the view of Dubbo hosting a game between 2021 and 2023 and stakeholders will be consulted for potential partnerships, before a report will come back to Council.

"Group XI through President Bob Walsh have indicated they are very supportive of Council's plan and willing to help out. I have had other business owners and people indicate their interest in sponsoring or supporting a match here," Councillor Shields said.

"Getting the NRL to Dubbo can help our economy but it can also have a social boost. There is real excitement about bringing a match to the region.

"One question I have been getting is 'what teams I would like to see involved?'. I would love to see popular teams that would allow us to fill Apex Oval to capacity and show how well Dubbo can host big events."

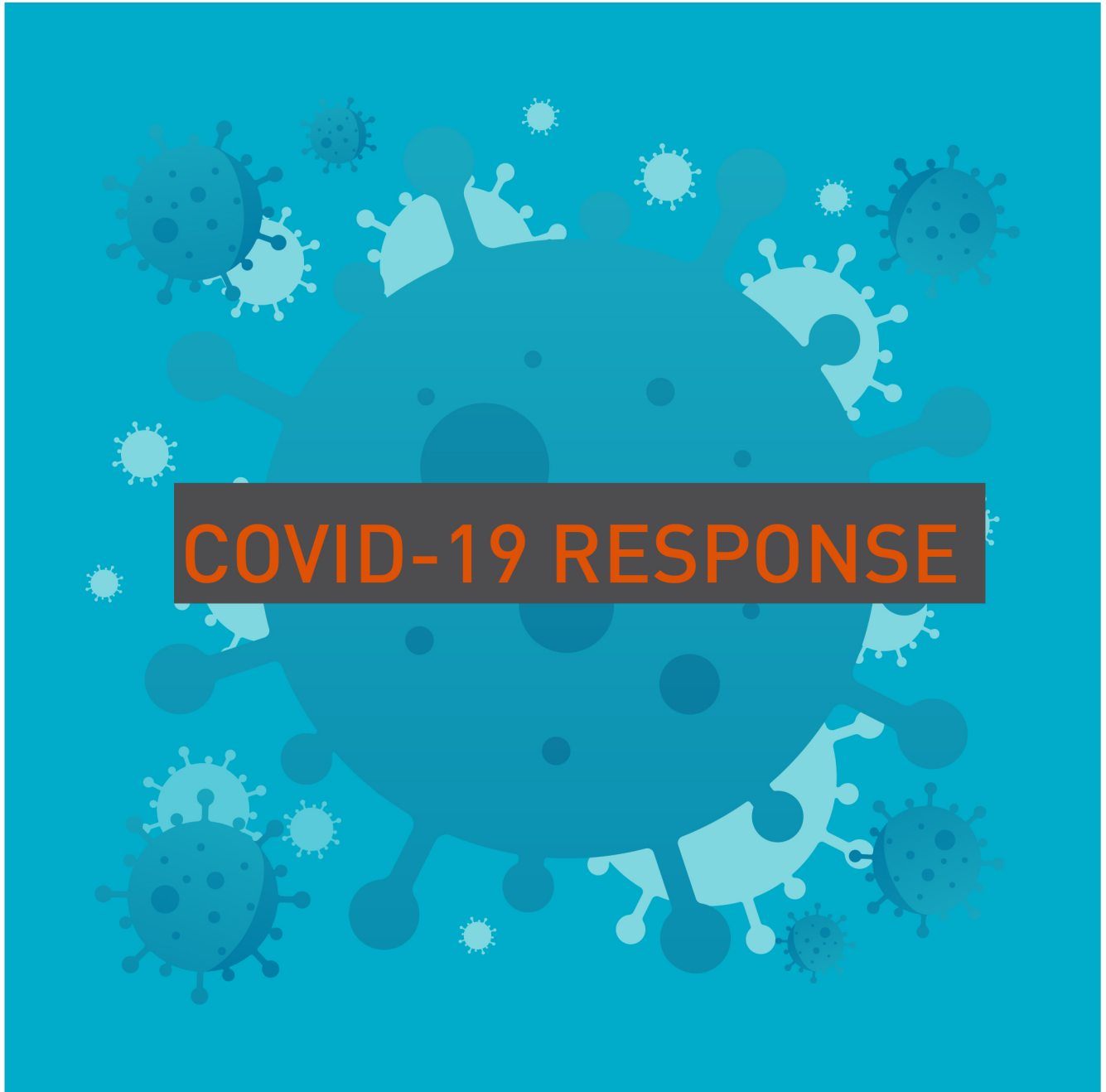
At Monday's meeting Councillors also endorsed a Mayoral Minute that will see an Economic Recovery Taskforce established to help Dubbo bounce back from the pandemic.

"We know that as many as 2,300 jobs have been impacted by COVID-19 in our region. That is 10% of everyone employed, so there is a lot of work to do. This is about ensuring local businesses are able to get back on their feet and our economy recovers as quick as it possibly can," Councillor Shields said.

"Big events like an NRL match is one strategy, but the taskforce will be looking at all options to stimulate our economy."

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