

## POLICE SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS GOVERNMENT INACTION

With more than \$500,000 seized by NSW Police Force that ultimately dismantled a complex drug syndicate in Wellington and Sydney, Mayor of the Dubbo Region Ben Shields is calling on monies seized under the proceeds of crime be re-directed by the NSW Government to tangible 'on the ground' crime prevention measures, like a drug and alcohol detoxification and rehabilitation centre; and other measures that prevent and deter criminal behaviour in regional areas. In particular, regional areas seen as a 'softer' target by criminals due to police resources being stretched, or not always present 24/7 in smaller towns and villages.

"Like the rest of the region I was cheering the excellent effort from our police in busting this group," Councillor Shields said. Wellington and the entire region is safer now due to the good work of a lot of very skilled police."

"However, the job isn't finished. Now that one supplier has been busted, another will move in. What is needed now is prevention measures including making sure that any new suppliers have a reduced number of people seeking drugs in the first place.

"With Wellington and the region having its struggles over the years, it is ludicrous that the largest local government area west of the Blue Mountains does not have a detoxification and rehabilitation centre for those affected and seeking to improve their lives. The closest facility is at Cowra and this is just too far away.

"Noting that two parliamentary enquiries have recommended that the Dubbo LGA get a detoxification and rehabilitation centre, added to the fact that the federal government has pledged \$3 million and the regional council has offered free land, it's now time the state government rose to the challenge and simply do what their own parliamentary enquiry says to do.

"To be clear, there is near unanimous support for a drug and alcohol detoxification and rehabilitation centre in our local community. All 10 Dubbo Region Councillors support the facility. The federal Coalition government supports the centre, and the NSW Opposition also supports it.

"While it's obvious that a detoxification and rehabilitation facility would cost substantially more than just half a million dollars, this would be a start."

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