



MAYORAL MEMO - 12 JULY 2023

The great Jack Gibson, coach of the Australian Rugby League Team of the Century, had many renowned quotes. His most famous was when he quipped that Cronulla and Australian player, Andrew Ettingshausen, was so quick that he could switch off the bedroom light and be under the covers before the room was dark!

My personal favourite? “If you’re standing still, you’re going backwards fast.” Gibson was often criticised for his various innovations in coaching – before being copied! He was the first to use computers and videos as coaching aids; the first to train with other codes to utilise different training methods; the first to use mascara under the eyes to reduce glare in night games and, with Johnny Peard, was the first to use the “bomb” as an attacking weapon.

Gibson was focused on the world of Rugby League but he could just as easily have been talking about local government.

The first official local government in Australia was the Perth Town Trust, established in 1838. Dubbo was declared a village on 23 November 1849 but local government was not established until the Municipal District of Dubbo was approved by the Colonial Secretary on 19 February

1872 with the first six aldermen elected into office on 22 April 1872.

I can guarantee that Council has changed many times over those 151 years but if we don't continue to innovate now, we will go backwards.

As we speak today, you can view an amenities block being built via 3D printing technology. Dubbo Regional Council is the first council in the nation to construct its infrastructure using such a method. Sometimes you have to be bold and courageous and do things differently. 3D printing is a novelty today but I don't believe it will be long before you drive past most construction sites and see 3D printing in action.

I also understand the concerns that some people hold. The same as some people like Vegemite and others detest it, there are some who embrace change and others who would prefer things to stay the same. It is one thing in choosing what to have on toast but in local government, I don't believe we have a choice but to embrace change. Otherwise we will go backwards fast.

3D printing is just one area where Council continues to innovate. Innovation doesn't have to be obvious with a large concrete structure. Our staff EV policy is also leading the nation with innovation and when you see DRC staff driving around Dubbo in their Teslas, you know that they are saving you money. We have even more opportunities to innovate in our thinking and approaches with our Renewable Energy Zone. Rest assured, with our current group of Councillors and our staff leadership, innovation is going to be a word you hear more often than stagnation.

Councillor Mathew Dickerson
Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

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