



# MAYORAL MEMO - 12 OCTOBER 2022

Emeritus Mayor Allan Smith, Dubbo's 15th longest serving Mayor since the gazetting of the municipality on 24 April 1872, used to often talk about his concept of the structure of Council. He often compared it to an ASX listed company. The ratepayers are the shareholders. The Councillors perform a similar function to the Board of Directors. The Mayor could be thought of as the Chairman of the organisation. The staff are answerable to their direct managers who are ultimately responsible to the CEO who is, in turn, accountable to the Councillors.

There are some important differences between an ASX listed company and a Council, not least of which is the legislation which both operate under, but there are important similarities.

There is the common business expression that a failure to plan is a plan to failure. Most successful businesses have their budget for at least the next year and some form of short and middle term business plan. Councils have legislative requirements around budgets and forward plans but Councils are usually quite competent at putting plans together for the long-term vision for a community. Just in this last week, we have

seen the critical importance of planning. Dubbo has a Local Emergency Management Committee which draws on resources from the SES; Police; Council and more. There are a variety of plans ready to be actioned when required. Flooding is just one of those situations where forward planning is required to ensure satisfactory outcomes are delivered. Take the situation we have seen over the last week. It has been 2010 since Council was required to shut the Emile Serisier Bridge. With water reaching levels of 8.63m, it was again required to close this significant thoroughfare last weekend. Other road closures were also part of this.

All of this was very operational and as part of the policy-making function of Council, I sat back and watched in awe as a number of different agencies worked together to close roads, redirect traffic and then, when the river had dropped sufficiently, prepare roads to be opened again in short timeframes.

I am incredibly proud of the way our staff and the related agencies enacted these plans and delivered a safe outcome for the community with as little disruption as possible.

This all relied on another important aspect of business. Relationships. They are critical in business and critical in Council. Strong relationships will deliver better outcomes and that applies internally as well as externally with other agencies.

The actions this last week drew the attention of His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley who called me to check on Dubbo and also congratulate the community on its resilience and wish our residents the best going forward.

While we work together, we can achieve just about anything.

**Councillor Mathew Dickerson**  
**Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council**

Last Edited: 12 Oct 2022