



MAYORAL MEMO-21 DECEMBER 2022

Friday this week will be the one-year anniversary of the induction of our current group of Councillors. At our most recent Council meeting, a fellow Councillor had been posed a question. Have you actually achieved anything in the last year?

It was a simple enough question with a huge answer.

It would be fair to say that the nine new Councillors took over in less-than-ideal circumstances. In the last six months of the previous Council, two Councillors resigned, there was a change in Mayor, the appointment of a new CEO, an operating deficit of \$20.3 million over the previous three years and the Minister for Local Government placed a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) on the Council. A PIO is only one step away from the suspension of a Council.

“Less-than-ideal” seems like a euphemism.

Hitting the ground running, the first Ordinary meeting of Council saw every Councillor lodge a notice of motion to start some action in a

specific area. The anti-tourism water restriction signs at our entrances were removed. The Dubbo Regional Airport undertook a name change. A tough decision was made with a DA for a boarding house in North Dubbo.

Councillors made the decision to take regular meetings to Wellington and to further demonstrate the desire of the new Councillors to interact with the community, sixteen community committees were formed. Council was back in the real estate market for the first time in years with 52 lots for sale in Keswick Estate.

Linkages with the broader community were forged with DRC joining the Alliance of Western Councils; Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance; Newell Highway Task Force; Regional Cities NSW and Regional Capitals Australia. MOUs were signed with CSU and the Dubbo Aboriginal Community Working Party.

A \$225 million budget was approved with an emphasis on returning finances to the black and a new power agreement will see a saving of a million dollars over ten years with the purchase of renewable energy.

The long overdue Boundary Road extension was opened which gave better access to the school zone on Sheraton Road and a new bridge was built at Terrabella. Dubbo is progressive printing of 3D buildings; adopting a policy to transition our fleet to zero emission vehicles and with a twilight Australia Day event.

All of this while Development Applications continued to be processed and the median house price rose by a record 25 per cent over the last year to \$525,000. Funding was secured for the Wiradjuri Cultural Tourism Facility with planning well underway for that in addition to

several Master Plans.

Not surprisingly, the Minister also removed the PIO.

On top of that brief summary, I believe our main achievements are stability and giving the community confidence in a Council they can trust again.

On behalf of all Councillors and staff at DRC, Merry Christmas!

Councillor Mathew Dickerson
Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

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