

**-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-**

**27 JULY 2022:**

**MAYOR COMMENTS ON FINANCIAL SITUATION**

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC) mayor Cr Charlie Sheahan has issued a statement regarding CGRC finances.

“No doubt many of you would have seen or heard the recent media around the council’s finance problems as detailed in the Finch report presented to the last council meeting on Tuesday 26 July 2022.

I would like to reassure everyone that Council is dealing with the current situation and has already implemented many of the recommendations that the Finch report had provided.

The Finch report was at my request and the Interim General Manager Les McMahon, engaged Bob Finch to do an audit into the processes and structure around finances within the organisation.

I am very pleased with the report in the sense that it is easy to understand and provides the platform for moving forward with addressing the long-term problem of managing budget restraint.

Firstly, let me make it quite clear that council has not lost any money, our problem has been spending too much, which has put pressure on our financial resources and future sustainability.

Over the past 5 years Council has provided great outcomes for the community, with new parks, play equipment, splash park, pump tracks, upgrades to Cootamundra and Gundagai main streets, new footpaths, kerb and gutter replacement and street pavements. Many of our village halls have been renovated, sewer and water mains replaced and renewed, and we have built a new sewage treatment plant in Gundagai.

Some \$83 million dollars of projects, of which \$38 million has been completed and approximately \$45million currently in progress or still to be undertaken.

All would have to agree this is a huge achievement by our staff who have worked very hard to bring about the wonderful results we see around us every day, I can’t congratulate them enough.

However, we have had a poor record over the past 5 years to manage the budget and have depleted our cash reserves which will mean we have to firmly manage our budgets and as the report stated aim at a modest surplus of \$2 to \$3 million a year.

Council has recently employed a new Manager of Finance and is in the process of implementing a strong structure within the organisation that will provide greater transparency and accountability.

As your Mayor, I want to reassure you all that council is addressing the problems of the past administration and working very hard to improve our overall operation and pursue greater efficiency and a more positive outcome for the future,” Cr Sheahan said.

**Photo and Caption:** CGRC Mayor Charlie Sheahan has issued a statement regarding Council’s finances.

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