

25 AUGUST 2022:

## **MAYOR & GM CALL FOR PATIENCE DURING TRANSITION**

The Minister for Local Government the Hon Wendy Tuckerman MP has announced that the proposal put forward by Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC) to demerge has been successful.

Minister Tuckerman issued a press release late on Wednesday afternoon, stating she had made the decision to demerge Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council.

The proposal presented by CGRC in July 2021 prompted a second Boundaries Commission enquiry, which triggered another round of examinations and reports to De-Amalgamate the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council area, and public inquiries were held in Cootamundra and Gundagai in April 2022. Public Submissions were also called for along with financial implications and analysis from Deloitte.

CGRC Mayor Charlie Sheahan who is currently in Western Australia, was notified after business hours on Wednesday evening, by phone call and letter from the Minister.

Social media ran hot, with the announcement and subsequent Media Release shared by Local Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP. With the message shared across various pages.

CGRC, Acting General Manager, Mr Glen McAtear said the last six years have been tough on staff, and stressed the need for patience and consideration as the organisation goes through the transitional stages to reinstate the former Cootamundra and Gundagai Shire Councils.

“The Minister will come up with a model for the demerge, and our organisation as it is today will work with the Minister to ensure a smooth transition. It won’t happen overnight, and none of us at this time have any idea how long the transition will take. However, at this point it’s business as usual. I have every confidence that our staff will act professionally and competently delivering services to our communities, whilst working together to ensure that the demerging of the organisation is successful,” Mr McAtear said.

“The Mayor has spoken with the Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke and the Minister for Local Government, Wendy Tuckerman, assuring them of our support. We have made it clear that to expect staff to go through another two years is unreasonable and we want to get this demerger under way as quickly as possible,” Mr McAtear added.

“We must remember that during the last six years, there have been some wonderful projects and advancements delivered for our communities, many that have gone on in the background that have seen an improvement in processes, facilities, and efficiencies. There have been great relationships formed between staff members from both communities, with skills and experience passed on for the benefit of the organisation and in turn for our communities. I hope that the experiences we have all had will enhance the way we work forward, and we will continue to support each other into the future,” Mr McAtear said.

CGRC mayor Cr Charlie Sheahan agreed with Mr McAtear and said it was business as usual as the organisation goes through the transition.

“It’s business as usual, for CGRC, whilst we resolve the intricacies of the de-amalgamation. Our staff will continue to deliver the services our communities need, will continue to assist residents and will carry on doing the jobs they are paid to do. Councillors have committed to work together and with the Minister as we await advice from the Minister and Office for Local Government on the timing and implementation of the de-amalgamation. Now we get down to work, it is going to be a big job to demerge, there will be some pain and my focus is to support all staff as we move through this process,” Cr Sheahan said.

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