

**-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-**

**2 July 2024:**

**Mayor Sheahan Issues Statement On Decision To Resign.**

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC), mayor Councillor Charlie Sheahan, informed CGRC staff and fellow councillors of his intention to resign as Mayor and not seek re-election as a Councillor in the forthcoming Council elections to be held in September. Cr Sheahan cited his decision to resign effective from July 8, 2024, was as a result of the inaction by the Minister for Local Government Ron Hoenig on deferring the Council elections for CGRC given the demerger proposal that is before the Local Government Boundaries Commission. Minister Hoenig has referred the demerger proposal to the Boundaries Commission.

**Mayor Sheahan issued the following statement:**

Last Thursday 27 June I gave notice to all councillors and all staff that as of the 8 July 2024, I would be resigning as Mayor.

I will continue as a councillor up until the elections in September.

I will not be seeking re-election.

My decision came as a result of a late urgent business item before council at last Tuesday's ordinary meeting.

The business item was to engage the electoral commission to run the Local Government election for the 14 September, at a cost to the rate payer in the vicinity of \$220,000.

I along with councillors and staff were expecting the Minister for Local Government Ron Hoenig to defer our election given that CGRC is in the process of demerging and that he had previously stated that he could do this if the process was delayed.

I had pursued clarification on this right up until the meeting and had even requested the Premier for NSW, Chris Minns to intervene and somehow persuade Minister Hoenig to defer the election in our case.

To go to an election now when our Council is once again before the Boundaries Commission and under review is not practical, not fair to the candidates or the incoming council and can be seen as an unnecessary waste of money if and when another election is needed for new councils.

I have lost all trust in the Minister for Local Government, in regard to the demerger process, he has shown no real commitment or resolve to expedite a solution to the problem of his own making.

The minister has shown no support or concern for our communities or our staff, who are facing extraordinary difficulties on a daily basis. Many staff have left the organisation, often in tears, losing their jobs, careers that they love and cherish, jeopardising their livelihoods.

I personally don't want to see anyone else suffering because of this situation.

I stated in my speech in the chamber that I would not be a party to anything that would prolong the anxiety and suffering that I have witnessed throughout my entire two terms of this merger.

I have had enough, agreeing to an election for the existing CGRC is only going to prolong the process and is playing into the Minister's hand.

I thank councillors Bowden, Boyd and Glover, for seeing this as I do and putting the communities' interests first and foremost, and not supporting going to an election.

It appears obvious that the other 5 councillors reacted to the threat, which came in an email just prior to the meeting from the Office of Local Government on behalf of the Minister; "a failure to resolve to appoint the Commission could result in application of the various intervention powers available to the Minister under the Local Government Act, including Performance Improvement and/or suspension."

I am very sorry it has come to this; I wish the incoming Council to be elected in September well, and hope for a change in the near future to provide a better future for all.

**Picture and caption:**

Mayor Charlie Sheahan has resigned his position as mayor of CGRC and will not seek re-election at Council elections in September. An extra-ordinary meeting of Council will be held on 16 July 2024 to elect a Mayor to fill the casual vacancy.



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**Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council**  
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