

# WARRUMBUNGLE SHIRE COUNCIL

## Ordinary Meeting – 19 July 2018

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### Item 28 Coonabarabran Emergency Water Supply Project – July 2018 Update

<b>Division:</b>	Technical Services
<b>Management Area:</b>	Warrumbungle Water
<b>Author:</b>	Acting Director Technical Services – Russell Lloyd
<b>CSP Key Focus Area:</b>	Public Infrastructure & Services
<b>Priority:</b>	P17 Communities across the Shire are supported by the secure, long term supply of energy and clean water.

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#### **Reason for Report**

To update Council on the progress of the Coonabarabran Emergency Water Supply Project.

#### **Background**

Council has received monthly reports on the project setting out details on the progress of the works being undertaken and the water level in Timor Dam.

This report sets out the current position as at 15 July 2018.

#### **Issues**

- The water level in Timor Dam has remained relatively stable and has been currently measured at 22.7%.
  - Council has been drawing all its supply over the past months from the four (4) existing bores near the Water Treatment Plant, the Castlereagh River and one of the new bores adjacent to the Water Treatment Plant.
  - One of the new bores (Bore No 7) at the Water Treatment Plant has been connected and is operating.
  - As previously indicated the test bore at Morrissey's Corner (Bore No 9) has been abandoned and a decision taken to drill a new test bore near the dam. A test bore licence had already been granted for this test bore.
  - The Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Trade and Industry, and Minister for Regional Water, The Hon. Niall Blair visited Council on Wednesday, 11 July 2018 and inspected the works and dam.
  - The Minister has approved additional 100% funding up to \$742,500 to allow Council to complete the project and connect several additional bores..
  - The final five (5) Operating Licences for the bores were issued to Council on 9 July 2018 and can be operated 28 days from their approval date of 27 June 2018 (ie 26 July 2018).
  - All equipment, piping and pumps have been ordered for connecting the bores to the main line from the dam to the Water Treatment Plant.
  - Power supply to the Bart Bok bore (Bore No 11) is awaited.
  - Once all bores are connected it is anticipated that the available supply through the plant will be between 1.0ML/day and 1.2ML/day from the bores and river. The current demand averaging 0.5ML/day.
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Therefore, having regard to the difficulties residents living close to but outside the reticulated water supply area face, it is considered that supply from Council's standpipe at Council's Coonabarabran Depot could be made available to individual residents and licensed water carters, as per the Council's Revenue Policy.

Also consideration could be given to decreasing water restrictions from the current level 6 to level 5. This would be particularly beneficial to businesses. Such a change could be implemented after allowing time for the bore supply to be fully tested under operating requirements. It is suggested that this change be considered at the October 2018 Council Meeting.

The draft Drought Management Plan presented to Council at its Ordinary meeting of 21 June 2018 sets out six levels of water restrictions. This information is provided as an enclosure under separate cover.

### **Financial Considerations**

The Minister has approved 100% additional funding up to \$742,500 to allow Council to complete the whole of the project. This grant will allow the proposed additional bore near the dam (Bore No 12) to be drilled, fitted out and connected.

The total budget available for the project is \$2,092,500 (including Council funds of \$325,000) and the updated estimated total cost is \$1,950,000.

### **Options**

Council has the option of allowing residents without reticulated water to obtain supply themselves from Council's standpipe or via a licensed carrier. Council also has the option of relaxing the water restrictions. The first is favoured, however the relaxing of water restrictions without rain events could be counter productive if the restrictions then need to be tightened again in the future, because of factors such as a down turn in production through the bores or the aquifers not recharging as anticipated.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Note the July 2018 Update Report on the Coonabarabran Emergency Water Supply Project, and;
2. Allow residents outside the Coonabarabran town water supply to purchase water from Council's Coonabarabran standpipe themselves, or by utilising a licensed water carter, during the current drought.
3. Monitor the level of usage of water from the Coonabarabran standpipe.
4. If no relieving rains are received then review the water restrictions in Coonabarabran in October 2018 to determine the impact on the bore supply.