

1 March 2023

New rules for abandoned property

Unattended items including vehicles, shopping trolleys, or wandering stock on our streets, roads and public spaces, are being targeted under new NSW State Government rules commencing 1 May 2023.

“Unattended property can create not only an eyesore but also more substantial hazards for community members,” said Warrumbungle Shire Council Mayor Councillor Ambrose Doolan. “Dealing with the problem is an issue for all councils as it takes a lot of time and money, so it is welcomed news that the changes to the law strengthen how Council can respond to abandoned property.”

The *Public Spaces Act 2021* has replaced the outdated *Impounding Act 1993* and creates stronger incentives for people to take responsibility for their property in public. This law has been introduced by the NSW Government.

“The new law makes it easier for councils to store and dispose of unattended or abandoned items and animals, significantly reducing red tape and the cost to local communities,” said Cr Doolan.

“There is a grace period until 1 May 2023 where warnings will be issued for unattended property in most cases, rather than fines. This is in place to give the community and retail sector time to adjust to the new rules,” explained Cr Doolan.

“Importantly in our area, the new law includes special powers for councils to deal with stock animals wandering on public roads and causing a risk to safety. Owners of stock should be vigilant and check that fencing is in good order to prevent stock wandering,” said Cr Doolan.

Further information about the new laws and what they mean for you can be found at dpie.nsw.gov.au/unattendedproperty.

Media: Leanne Ryan | (02) 6849 2000