

MEDIA RELEASE



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Friday, 5 June 2009

Council Listens to the Community

More than 450 written and verbal submissions and a petition with over 1000 signatures were tabled at the Moree Plains Shire Council Meeting on Thursday, 4 June 2009, in response to its Management Plan and proposed rate increase for 2009/2010.

Mayor, Cr. Katrina Humphries tabled the documents to allow Council time to consider the comments and suggestions put forward prior to finalising next years Management Plan on Thursday, 18 June 2009.

"Council appreciates all the comments received from the Community, and especially the many positive suggestions as to how we can improve our operations to better service the Ratepayers and Residents of the Shire," Cr Humphries said.

"We cannot, as Albert Einstein noted, continue to operate in the same fashion year after year, and expect to get a different result," Cr Humphries added.

"Council will invite a number of those who made suggestions to work together with us to find the type of productivity increases we need to make sure we are getting the best bang for our buck."

Moree Plains will ask Ratepayers to join two Task-forces looking at Productivity gains and future Rate structures.

Acting General Manager and Director of Engineering, Murray Erbs said that he hoped to have a number of recommendations from the Efficiency Task-force dealing with sustainable road service delivery back to Council for consideration within 12 weeks.

"Council appreciates that the public participation is particularly time critical, but we are committed to working with the community in meeting their future needs," Mr Erbs stated.

"Council's Road Improvement Committee will continue to work through the Shire's Asset Management issues, additional community assistance is welcomed and essential," he said.

Moree businesswoman, Natalie Cook, who organised the Shire-wide Petition, welcomed the swift response from the Council and said she was pleased to have an opportunity to take part in the Taskforce process.

"Council must be responsive to the needs of those that it is here to serve," Mrs Cook insisted.

"I appreciate this opportunity to be able to state my opinions, and have faith that the Council will listen," she said.

"We can't be expected to continue to pay without Council making some adjustments to its own operations," Mrs Cook added.

Councillor Humphries reiterated that the Road System throughout the Moree Plains Shire required a massive funding injection for it to be sustainable, and that the Council was committed to taking whatever steps were appropriate to allow production to continue in this Region.

"You don't have to be a genius to know that we have to operate smarter if we are to move forward. Cr Humphries concluded. "We know it; the public has confirmed it and Council is listening."

END

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