

Chief Executive Officer's Report

It's that time of year again to briefly reflect on some major activities/achievements and items of interest that transpired during 2004/2005.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

This year it was demonstrated that the district was ably protected by the efforts of the volunteer emergency service groups within the Shire. During the fire season the volunteer Bush Fire Brigades were very active in assisting in controlling fires both within our district and townships and assisting our neighbours. Particular mention should be made of a number of efforts including;

- during the year, two new bush fire brigades, Marchagee and West Coorow were established. These brigades will be the first response in their local area;
- the efforts of volunteers in fighting the very large bushfire in Warradarge on 14 December 2004. This particularly large fire although managed by FESA, was attended by volunteers from all brigades, with the exception of the Marchagee Brigade, who responded to a smaller fire on the same day;
- the construction of the new Coorow Fire Station. This new 2 bay station was constructed by the Coorow brigade itself at considerable cost saving; and
- the continued efforts of volunteer fire fighters to attend training in far off locations such as Geraldton to qualify as Fire Control Officers.

In 2004/2005 the Fire Emergency Service Levy was introduced throughout Western Australia. The FESA levy, charged to all property owners and collected by Local Authorities, provides for the costs of servicing local brigades and the provision of capital equipment. During the 2004/2005 the Shire of Coorow received \$30,000 of operational funding, \$35,000 for the new Coorow fire station and a light tanker for the Coorow Brigade.

MAIN STREET COOROW

During 2004/2005 Council staff, in conjunction with local tradesmen and volunteers from the Coorow Townscape Committee, completed the upgrade of the Main Street.

The works have rejuvenated the Main Street business precinct and will continue with the Coorow Townscape Committee's phased development of the adjacent Town Park.

The funding for these works were contributed by Coorow Community Land Inc, the Coorow Townscape Committee, grant funding through the Midwest Development Commission's Regional Development Scheme, and Council.

HEALTH SERVICES

Council's provision of Health services to residents continued to increase during 2004/2005. Council now provides:

- medical facilities in both Leeman and Coorow for visiting medical services;
- financial support for the weekly visit to Leeman by a doctor from the Jurien Bay Practice;
- in partnership with the Shire of Dandaragan, Council has entered into an agreement with the Jurien Bay Practice to provide a 24 hour/7 day per

week Doctor service from the Jurien Bay Medical Centre; and

- a contribution to any financial deficit of the North Midlands Medical Practice to ensure the practice continues to service the town of Coorow on a weekly basis and the emergency service from the North Midlands Hospital.

CAPITAL WORKS

During 2004/2005 Council was successful in obtaining an additional \$220,000 of grant funding for the re-construction of a 3km section of Coorow Latham Road. These funds were made available for road construction just prior to the State election. However Council was required to reprioritise road construction during the year, seeing a number of jobs either not completed or not begun.

Major projects in the 2004/2005 Capital Works Program included:

- Coorow Green Head Road – reseal 11 km – (\$152,905);
- Bingham Street, Falconer Drive, and Rowlands Road – Reseal – (\$4,171);
- Thomas Street – construct and seal 450 m – (\$73,226);
- Gunyidi Wubin Road – regravelling 8 km – (\$25,805). This project will be completed in 2005/06;
- Mudge Road – regravelling 8 km – (\$107,491);
- Randall Road – verge widening 3.8 km – (\$41,135);
- Woolmulla Road – regravelling 3 km and drainage – (\$64,763). This project will be completed in 2005/06;

- Tootbardie Road – regravelling 6 km – (\$10,834). This project was not completed; and
- Coorow Latham Road – reconstruct and seal 3 km – (\$249,166). This project will be completed in 2005/06;

Major projects in Council's 2004/2005 Capital Works Program but not completed include:

- Launer Road – regravelling 8 km;
- Penn Road – regravelling 6 km;
- Woolmulla Road – drainage;
- Tootbardie Road – regravelling 5 km;
- Gunyidi Wubin Road – regravelling 7 km.

ASSET REPLACEMENT

Council continues to endeavour to meet the needs of the community by upgrading Council's fixed assets on a regular basis. In 2004/2005 Council's single significant plant purchase was that of a Iveco prime mover to replace the existing, older Volvo prime mover. In the last five years Council's Plant Replacement Program has significantly reduced maintenance expenditure by about \$70,000 per annum.

During 2004/2005 Council sold surplus staff housing in Coorow. Council sold three houses, two to Council employees. In addition Council sold vacant commercial property to an adjacent business in Coorow. The proceeds of these sales were transferred to Council's newly created Building Reserve, where the proceeds will be used to construct future Council housing.

OTHER PROJECTS

Other projects initiated by Council in the 2004/2005 included:

- Installation of new accounting software SynergySoft;
- Installation of new pool filters at the Coorow Aquatic Centre. This is the first stage of a gradual refurbishment program of the Coorow Aquatic Centre; and
- the construction of a separation wall between the Leeman Recreation Centre function area and the Leeman Sporting and Community Club. Council has identified the need to construct ablation facilities to this area in the future.

FINANCE

It is pleasing to see Council’s 2004/2005 operations reflecting an improved operating result than Council’s 2004/2005 Budget. This improvement is the result of better than anticipated receipts from grant funding, specifically an unbudgeted \$220,000 grant for reconstructing the Coorow Latham Road.

Council had budgeted to take loans totaling \$170,000 during 2004/05 however an amount of only \$120,000 was borrowed. The loan drawn was a mortgaged self supporting loan made to Coorow non-profit organisation Coorow Community Land Inc, for their purchase of the Coorow Roadhouse.

Details of all of Council’s loans, as at 30 June 2005, are set out below:

| Loan | Outstanding 30 June 2005 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Loan 68 – Leeman Rec. Centre* | 99,629 |
| Loan 69 – Coorow Residence | 78,385 |

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| Loan 70 – Leeman Rec. Centre | 146,016 |
| Loan 71 – Leeman Residence | 108,174 |
| Loan 72 – Roadworks | 54,747 |
| Loan 74 – Plant Purchase | 38,093 |
| Loan 75 – Mobile Telephones | 40,353 |
| Loan 76 – Green Head Boat Ramp | 27,606 |
| Loan 77 – Coorow Community Land* | 141,057 |
| Loan 78 – Green Head Drainage | 76,230 |
| Loan 79 – Leeman Executive House | 82,278 |
| Loan 80 – Plant Purchase - Grader | 100,000 |
| Loan 81 – Coorow Community Land* | 115,477 |
| Total | 1,235,142 |

* Self Supporting Loan

COMPLAINTS

In April 2005 Council adopted their Complaints Handling Policy. This policy looks to formalize the handling of complaints received by Council.

In the period to 30 June 2005 under this new policy, Council received two complaints. The two complaints were:

1. rates – individual’s outstanding rates issues checked and Council position was indeed correct. The complainant was advised by mail the day after the complaint; and
2. animal complaint – sheep wandering in Coorow town. Animals were collected, the ranger advised. This occurred on the day of the complaint. The ranger followed up matter with the owner.

DISABILITY SERVICES PLAN

Council, with regard to its Disability Services Plan, aims to improve access to all Council facilities. During the year no projects required improved access to Council’s facilities.

CONCLUSION

The Shire of Coorow's recordkeeping plan has not been evaluated for efficiency or effectiveness. It is expected that such an evaluation will be done by the 30 June 2007.

Recordkeeping training to date has been conducted in-house. The need for external training has not been identified as being required to successfully implement Council's recordkeeping plan

During the induction of new employees, Council's roles and responsibilities are outlined regarding compliance with Council's Recordkeeping Plan.

CONCLUSION

My thanks to Councillors for their cooperation, assistance and efforts during the year.

This year has offered many challenges as Chief Executive Officer of the Shire of Coorow. In particular I would like to thank my fellow staff members for their support to me personally and for their devotion to providing a quality service to our communities.

Council staff appreciate and acknowledge the ongoing commitment and efforts of the community organisations within the Shire of Coorow and their tireless volunteer workers. It would not be prudent to single out any one organisation or volunteer, but simply to say our communities greatly benefit from all of your involvement.



G A SHERRY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER