Council News with Deputy Mayor Len Roberts

Storm News

Much has happened in the last week after the storm and various items elsewhere in the paper will no doubt cover various aspects. However I would like to highlight some things.

The visit of Brigadier Naumann last Monday was especially significant as he saw firsthand the vegetation piles and storm damage and listened to the ongoing needs of the community.

He was impressed with the recovery effort in our shire and paid tribute to the resilience, caring nature and self-help attitude of our community.

It was indeed an honour to show him around. His presence and manner demonstrated that he and the Government were caring and listening.

It was great to hear that the State and Federal governments announced additional disaster assistance for communities affected by the recent storms and flood.

The range of assistance measures available include:

Personal hardship and distress assistance for affected individuals and families

Support for councils to undertake counter disaster operations and restore essential public assets

Concessional interest rate loans for small businesses, primary producers and voluntary not-for-profit bodies

Freight subsidies for primary producers, and

Grants to voluntary not-for-profit bodies.

This assistance will also help to rebuild and replace basic infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, and assist councils with the clean-up bill.

For information on personal hardship and distress assistance, contact the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line on 1800 018 444. Applications for a concessional loan, grant or freight subsidy can be made through the NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593 or at www.raa.nsw.gov.au.

The community meeting arranged by the SES to debrief the community about what went well, what can be done better and ongoing awareness of disaster recovery plans was very successful.

Attendees divided into groups arranged around their geographical area such as (Pindimar/Bundabah, North Arm Cove and TGHN.

There was much praise for the SES, RFS and council workers for efficient and professional approach.

The take home message for all was be prepared with an emergency kit for when storms hit.

The message for council and emergency services was to develop guidelines as to what to do during the emergency and after the event.

For instance if your house was damaged and you needed refuge what do you do, or where to you go. or who to contact. Those who attended were most impressed with the meeting and look forward to the report on the findings.

It really is great to live in a caring and helping community.