

# ***FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK***



## **LOCAL PROCUREMENT**

Council is encouraging members of our community to become involved in a review of its 'Local Preference Policy' and will be engaging a Citizens Panel as part of the process. A Citizens Panel is an exciting and innovative form of community engagement which is used to involve community members in issues of local concern. Citizen Panels are particularly useful for issues where there is a desire for a consensus, but where detailed information needs to be weighed and evaluated.

The Citizens Panel will receive background information about the issue, hear from procurement, financial and economic development experts and then make considered commentary. Used effectively, a Citizens Panel can have a direct impact on decision-making by contributing a well-informed solution to a local issue.

Council will select the Citizens Panel from its community engagement website 'Create'. It is very important that this panel is randomly selected in order for it to represent a diverse cross section of our community. It is also essential that all members of the public have the opportunity to have their say. Therefore, following the panel's recommendations which will be presented to Council, the Draft Procurement Policy will be placed on public exhibition and all members of the community will be invited to participate and comment.

## **BELLINGEN SHIRE BRIDGE LOAD LIMITS**

Council has a clear focus on investment in local infrastructure and in particular our roads and bridges. Following the completion of the Timber Bridge Assessment Project, Council now has detailed reports on the condition and structural capacity of all 85 timber bridges across the Shire.

After a review of these reports, in order to ensure public safety, it is essential that Council apply load limits to 23 of these bridges until they can be repaired. Fortunately most of the load limited bridges will have a low impact on transportation activities, but I encourage members of the public to visit Council's community engagement website 'Create' where they can view detailed information about which bridges will have load limits imposed.

Bridges that have recently been improved or are currently undergoing reconstruction include McFadyens Bridge on Gordonville Road, Diehappy Bridge on Darkwood Road as well as Knights Bridge, Cooks Creek Bridge and Reids Creek Bridge on Kalang Road. Works on Kalang River Bridge on Bowraville Road, plus Feeneys Bridge, Coopernook Bridge and Deep Creek Bridge on Coramba Road are also due to commence shortly.

## **URUNGA MULTI PURPOSE INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY**

Local sporting groups have been campaigning for a multi-purpose facility at Urunga for many years, with potential uses including indoor basketball, football, netball and volleyball. Bellingen Shire Council will therefore develop a feasibility study for the proposed Urunga Multi-purpose indoor facility.

This study is a preliminary investigation involving review of existing documentation, identifying potential site locations, analysing demand, preparing concept plans, calculating whole of life cost, determining operational/management models, providing a cost benefit analysis and a community engagement component. This project is being funded by developer contributions that were specifically allocated towards this project when Council adopted the Community Facilities & Open Space Infrastructure Section 94 Developer Contribution Plan at its ordinary meeting in February 2014. For more information on this project please visit <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>

Until next time,

Cr Dominic King  
September 20<sup>th</sup> 2017