

Media Release

Historic election day for NSW's largest council

Saturday, 20 September 2025

The residents of Central Darling Shire in far west NSW will today vote to elect new councillors for the first time since the Council was placed in administration 12 years ago.

The Council's return to democracy was made possible by the creation of a new Rural and Remote Council model legislated by the Minns Labor Government last year.

Ten candidates have nominated for election across the Council's three wards, representing a range of experiences and backgrounds and reflecting the diversity of the almost 2,000 people that call the Shire home.

The first councillor has already been elected uncontested to represent the Menindee community in Ward C, while two candidates will be elected across Wards A and B.

The Minister for Local Government will appoint three councillors in the coming weeks before the first meeting of the new Council in October.

The Rural and Remote model will promote stable governance and ensure the Council has the right mix of skills and experience to manage the unique challenges of servicing such a large geographic area and sparse population.

Returning Central Darling Shire to democratic representation has been a priority for the Minns Labor Government, ending a period of administration that has been in place since 2013 due to long-standing financial and governance issues.

The new governance model was developed following extensive discussions with community members, Central Darling Shire Council administrator Bob Stewart, NSW state agencies and the Member for Barwon, Roy Butler.

The NSW Government is also providing \$6 million in funding to support the Council's financial stability. This funding will help the Council address immediate infrastructure priorities, build capacity and deliver local government services across the Shire.

Minister for Local Government Ron Hoenig said:

"Democracy is restored for Central Darling Shire.

"I thank the candidates that have put themselves forward to represent their community and I wish them all the best. I can attest that serving your community as a councillor is an important role and a great privilege.

"Today is an historic day as we end 12 years of administration and ensure once again, the communities of Central Darling have a local, democratic voice.

"For many of the Shire's younger residents, this will be their first time voting in a local government election.

"Central Darling Shire is one of the most unique councils in NSW, with the biggest geographic area in the state but a population of less than 2,000 residents."

Member for Barwon Roy Butler said:

“This has been a long time coming for the Shire and I’m very glad these communities are finally getting their local voice back.

“It’s encouraging to see several candidates have put their hand up to run for council.

“Central Darling Shire will be the first Rural and Remote Council in NSW and there will be a period of transition as all the councillors learn to work together.

“Importantly, the model will be in place for no more than 10 years and has the capacity to change.

“We all want to see the new council succeed and I look forward to working with the newly elected councillors to deliver for communities across the Shire.”

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