

# Frequently asked questions

## **What changes will be made to Central Darling Shire Council?**

The NSW Government will introduce laws to create a new type of local government model for Central Darling Shire called a Rural and Remote Council.

The new model will perform the same functions as a local council but will have a different structure with a mix of community elected councillors and councillors appointed by the NSW Government.

## **Why does Central Darling need a different type of council?**

Central Darling Shire Council has been in administration since 2013 because of significant financial and governance issues. The shire's large size and small populations make it difficult to provide services under the typical local government model.

This change to the Council's structure will give communities a voice and ensure they have an effective and stable council that can provide important local services into the future.

## **Why does the government need to change the law?**

As the NSW Government is creating a new type of council model the Local Government Act needs to be amended to support this.

## **What will the new Council look like?**

Central Darling Shire Council will be made up of three councillors elected by the community and three councillors appointed by the NSW Government.

It will function the same way as all other councils but the support of the appointed councillors will help plan and deliver services and infrastructure, and make sure the council is running effectively and is well managed.

## **Who will the NSW Government appoint?**

The Minister for Local Government will appoint people with specialist skills, expertise or attributes to help the Council run efficiently.

For example, the appointed councillors could have specialist financial skills or local government administration experience. The Government will look to appoint local people with expertise as much as possible.

## **How can we be certain there will be fair representation for the residents of Central Darling Shire?**

The three councillors elected by the community will have an important role representing the people of their ward, and in making the best decisions for the shire as a whole.

They will be elected by the community and will work alongside the three appointed councillors to make sure services, infrastructure and facilities are delivered.

## **What is the timeline for the new model?**

A Bill will be introduced to NSW Parliament shortly to change local government laws to create the new Rural and Remote Council model.

Once these laws are passed, local elections will be held for the community to elect three councillors across each ward.

## **When will the elections be held?**

An election for Central Darling Shire will be held in the first half of 2025.

## **Will the new model be permanent, or will Central Darling return to a traditional model of local government in the future?**

Central Darling Shire Council is one of the state's largest councils by area, with one of the smallest populations and rate bases, creating serious financial challenges.

The new model will reduce costs for the Council and increase its financial sustainability. It is being introduced as a long-term solution for the next 10 years. After this period the Council may remain as a Rural and Remote Council or return to the traditional local government model.

## **Will the government provide financial support for the Council?**

The NSW Government has provided a grant of \$477,782 to Central Darling Shire Council to support the Council in the transition to the Rural and Remote model.

A funding strategy will also be developed with the NSW Government to make sure the Council can be financially sustainable and provide services into the future.

## **Will council staff keep their jobs?**

The change to a Rural and Remote Council model will not affect the employment of staff at the council.

## **Will the administrator remain in his role?**

The administrator was appointed to lead the council in the absence of councillors. The administrator's term will be extended for a short period until the elections are held and will end when the new Rural and Remote Council commences.