



LITHGOW CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF COUNCIL

HELD ON

06 MARCH 2006

**MINUTES OF THE LITHGOW CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE CIVIC CENTRE, LITHGOW ON 6 MARCH 2006**

Meeting Commenced 6.00pm

Public Gallery: 10

PRESENT

His Worship the Mayor
Councillor Neville Castle
Councillor B P Morrissey
Councillor M F Ticehurst
Councillor W McAndrew
Councillor B S Moran
Councillor M M Collins
Councillor A E Thompson
Councillor M J Wilson

APOLOGIES

An apology was received and accepted from H K Fisher who was absent from the Meeting on personal business.

06- 51 RESOLVED

MOVED: Councillor W McAndrew **SECONDED:** Councillor M J Wilson.

Also in attendance

General Manager, Mr Paul Anderson
Manager Engineering Services, Mr Clive Cawthorne
Manager Environmental and Planning Services, Mr Andrew Muir
Finance Manager, Mrs Carol Farnsworth
Minutes Secretary, Miss Casey Clarke

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

06- 52 RESOLVED

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting of Council held on the 6 February 2006 were taken as read and confirmed by Councillors A E Thompson and W McAndrew

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

His Worship the Mayor called for Declarations of Interest on any matter before the Meeting.

NIL

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY

At 6.00pm members of public gallery were invited to address questions through the Mayor to Councillors and Staff: -

NIL questions were asked or raised.

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GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

ITEM: 1 EXEC - 06/03/06 - ELECTRICAL SERVICES

REFERENCE

NIL

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to highlight to Council the purpose to employ staff in the electrical services section of Council in lieu of the current reliance upon contractors and consultants.

COMMENTARY

As Council is aware since my commencement with Council I have been undertaking some significant change process throughout the organisation and reviewing the manner in which we provide services to our community. Some of these proposed changes have obviously carried some concern in the community (eg Special rate Variations) but are considered a necessary process should local government wish to remain sustainable in Lithgow. As previously advised along with reviewing areas of income, expenditure and costing of all Council services has also been undertaken. In this regard I have reviewed the payment Council makes to various contractors for electrical services. During the last financial year these amounted to some \$286,000 in 2003/04 and \$253,000 in 2004/05. It is proposed that Council actual consider employing qualified electricians and an apprentice to provide this service to Council. This will assist in providing a cost efficient service but also generate some additional local employment for the regions youth.

I have costed numerous options for such staff and believe in the first instance it is cost effective for Council to consider one (1) qualified electrician and two (2) apprentices, one (1) first year and one (1) second or third year.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

NIL

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report indicates additional costs in Council wages, however, "the offsetting" component is a reduction in contracts and materials paid by Council to external parties. The use of Council resources to undertake such functions ultimately results in savings in expenditure but an up skilling of the organisation and the provision of youth employment.

06- 53 RESOLVED

THAT Council note the proposal to employ in house electrical services for Council operations.

MOVED: Councillor A E Thompson

SECONDED: Councillor W McAndrew.

CARRIED

ENGINEERING SERVICES REPORTS

ITEM:2 ENG - 06/03/06 - EASEMENT TO DRAIN SEWERAGE OVER CROWN LAND PROPERTY: LOT 135 DP 755769, PORTLAND

REFERENCE

NIL

SUMMARY

Council recently applied to the Department of Local Government for Ministers approval for the compulsory acquisition of an easement to drain sewerage over Lot 135 DP 755769, which is Crown Land.

Council has now received approval upon application, hence it is now necessary for Council to undertake the following in order to finalise the execution of such easement:

Council must make the relevant resolution regarding classification of the interest in the land and formally advise when public notice is given of the classification, in accordance with s34 of the Act i.e "Operational or Community".

COMMENTARY

The Acquisition Notice must be gazetted between 91 and 120 days after the service of the Notice of Proposed Acquisition, the Notice will be deemed to have been withdrawn and another Notice cannot be given within 12 months without the Minister for Local Government's consent.

The General Manager for return to the "Department of Local Government" must also execute the following documents:

- Notice of Proposed Acquisition.
- Original Acquisition Notice
- Form of Notification of Proposed Acquisition Notice to the Registrar General.

For the intended purpose and use of the acquired land, a "Operation" status would appear the most relevant title for the purposes of draining sewerage over Lot 135 DP 755769, Portland.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

NIL

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council formally resolve that the acquisition of an easement to drain sewerage over Lot 135 in DP 755769 be classified as "Operational Land" and that the General Manager be authorised to execute all associated documentation for the finalisation of said acquisition of land.

06- 54 RESOLVED

THAT:

1. Council formally resolve that the acquisition of an easement to drain sewerage over Lot 135 in DP 755769 be classified as "Operational Land" and that the General Manager be authorised to execute all associated documentation for the finalisation of said acquisition of land.
2. Council affix the common seal to the Land Acquisition (Just terms Compensation) Act 1991 Notice of Compulsory Acquisition of an easement between Council and the Department of Crown Lands for access of an easement 2.0 wide to drain sewerage over Lot 135, DP 755769 Ridge Street, Portland which is Crown Land.

MOVED: Councillor M J Wilson

SECONDED: Councillor B S Moran.

CARRIED

ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING SERVICES REPORTS

ITEM:3 EPS - 06/03/06 - ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2006

SUMMARY

The Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting held on 8 February 2006 are provided for adoption.

COMMENTARY

ITEM 1 PRESENT

Rosalie Rayner, Brian Lovegrove, Allan Rayner, Trevor Flewin, Sue Graves, Narrelle Willison, Mike Rodda, Helen Drewe and Environment and Health Manager Amanda Muir.

ITEM 2 ALSO PRESENT

Wayne Levi

ITEM 3 APOLOGIES

Councillor BP Morrissey, Kaye Jenkins, George Quinell, Eric Mahony and Environmental and Planning Services Manager Andrew Muir.

ITEM 4 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2005

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 December 2005 were confirmed.

ITEM 4 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Date	Issue	Action
13 October 2004	Council consider immediately the issue of roadside litter and holding urgent discussions with the RTA.	A budget item proposal has been prepared and the issue is being considered by the Minister for Roads.
13 October 2004	Council consider options relating to the provision of a roadside collection.	
8 December 2004 & 13 April 2005	The preparation of a local noxious and environmental weed brochure be investigated.	The Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority has provided funding for the preparation of a local weeds brochure highlighting problematic weeds. Council can provide in-kind support this financial year for the design and layout of the brochure. Funding for printing is being sought from the Upper Macquarie County Council and/or Council.
8 June 2005	Contact Delta Electricity about the coal ash trucks at Lidsdale and the ash storage dam.	Awaiting information from Delta.

10 August 2005	Council liaise with the HNCMA, LOLA and the Upper Macquarie County Council to identify and control gorse infestations on its land having regards to the 2005/06 Budget.	All identified infestations on public land have been treated.
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In relation to the preparation of a local weeds brochure it is noted that the Upper Macquarie County Council may be preparing a new brochure and therefore the possibility of a joint brochure should be investigated.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the information be received.

ITEM 5 GARDENS OF STONE PARK PROPOSAL STAGE 2

There were no comments provided by the Committee.

ITEM 6 REQUEST FOR MEMBERSHIP

A request has been received from Mr Wayne Levi to become a Member of Council's Environmental Advisory Committee. The Committee Membership is as follows:

- 1 Councillor and officer support
- 2 Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association representatives
- 1 Lithgow and District Community Nursery representative
- 1 Lithgow TAFE representative
- 2 Tidy Towns Committee representatives
- 2 rural landholders (north and south)
- 3 local school representatives
- 1 representative from the local office of the Department of Natural Resources
- 1 representative from the Sydney Catchment Authority
- 1 representative from the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority
- 1 representative from GLASTIC
- 1 community representative.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Wayne Levi be accepted as a Committee Member.

Moved Sue Graves

SECONDED

Mike Rodda

ITEM 7 GENERAL BUSINESS

The following items of General Business were raised:

- Kristie Cooke has provided her resignation from the Committee.
- Can a report be provided relating to the proposed special rate for stormwater, in particular, what Council has in plan for the revenue? Have other means of funding been pursued both in the past and in the future? How much Council has spent in recent years in relation to rates and revenue on stormwater?

- The sizing of and plantings at the retention dam recently constructed on ADI land adjacent to Finlay Avenue was raised. It is noted that the works have been undertaken in consultation with Council and adjacent neighbours.
- It is noted that budget proposals have been submitted for the Street Tree/Great Western Highway Improvement project. This involves the design and landscaping of these areas over a two year period.
- The Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority advised that the new Native Vegetation Act has commenced which requires approval for the clearing of native vegetation. A local officer has been provided to assess applications. Generally speaking the Act applies to rural areas.
- The condition of the Pottery Estate was raised and it was advised that Council is pursuing this matter.
- It was enquired if Council receives any royalties from coal related developments. Council only receives contributions as dictated by the Section 94 Plan.
- The issue of mining sites was raised in particular the need for rehabilitation. It is noted that rehabilitation of mining sites is governed by numerous government departments and in some cases Council has no legal power to enforce such.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the information be received.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The only financial implications from these Minutes will be minimal salaries for the Technology Centre Coordinator, Environment and Health Manager and Administration Staff if a local noxious and environmental weed brochure was to be prepared in partnership with the Upper Macquarie County Council and the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications.

06- 55 RESOLVED

THAT the information be received.

MOVED: Councillor M J Wilson

SECONDED: Councillor B S Moran.

CARRIED

ITEM:4 EPS - 06/03/06 - FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

SUMMARY

1. To inform Council about a concept called "Family Friendly Community", including background research.
2. To inform Council about existing community and service provider support for the concept of the communities in Lithgow LGA as "Family Friendly".
3. To gauge the interest and support of council in developing a family friendly community initiative in the Lithgow area.

COMMENTARY

Research in the United States, Australia and elsewhere has recently brought forth overwhelming evidence that the foundation is laid in early childhood for health, well being and success in all stages of life. This has repercussions for the health of communities. It also presents a challenge for community leaders to help provide environmental conditions which value and contribute to children and families being supported in their communities.

The National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) has developed a Child Friendly Community Action Kit which outlines information and strategies relating to the need and goal of assisting Australian communities to be actively responsible for the well being of children and families.

The BUDS *Helping Families Grow in Family Friendly Communities* project in the Hunter Area is a working model targeting the Wallsend and Blue Gum areas, and recognises the Importance of community in the health and happiness of children. It particularly acknowledges the importance of communities being family friendly through the creation of partnerships between local business, government and the community.

From the 2001 Census, Lithgow LGA had 4246 children aged 14 years or under, which is 22.1% of the total population. (This is higher than the NSW percentage which is 20.6%).

In Lithgow LGA, the Lithgow Child Protection Interagency has for the past year been active in promoting family interaction, child development and community connectedness through initiatives such as Community Fun Days in the communities of Lithgow, Bowenfels, Wallerawang and Portland, Dads and Kids Fun Days and Lithgow Family Christmas Parties. These days have been highly successful with between 150 to 400 people attending each event and with families meeting one another to improve their formation of networks as well as their knowledge about family oriented services available. These initiatives have been enabled through the financial and in kind support of the state government through Families First and Community Builders, Lithgow Workmen's Club through its Community Development Expenditure Program, Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre, Rotary Club, Lithgow Community Projects, Lithgow City Council and others.

At the most recent meeting of the Child Protection Interagency it was discussed and resolved that the next logical progression in the development of mechanisms for the support and development of communities which nurture children, would be for the establishment in the Lithgow area of a Family Friendly Community Initiative. It was considered at the meeting that of paramount importance to the success of such an initiative would be the leadership and support of Lithgow City Council.

Issues

There is significant community momentum and partner support for a Family Friendly Community initiative across the Lithgow LGA. Lithgow faces particular challenges relating to geographically and socio-economically diverse communities. Funding for Community Days has been sporadic and from a variety of sources, however through the dedication of community service providers in Lithgow LGA the days have gained broad support in the communities where they have been held.

The Family Friendly Community initiative would provide the platform for an expansion of the success of the Community Fun Days and would enable the development of various activities aimed at better linking and supporting families in the community. Projects developed in the Hunter and which could be considered in Lithgow include an events calendar (including events such as library story times, sporting club registrations and community fun days), a guidelines and promotion for family friendly businesses and events, a logo competition engaging children in local primary schools which could be used to identify association with the initiative, and a continuation and expansion of the Community Fun Days into more of the outlying areas in the LGA such as Cullen Bullen, Capertee, Rydal or Hartley.

Public Participation

There is significant public support for the principles underpinning the concept of the Family Friendly Community. In the needs assessment for the current social plan review, community members identified that the need for child and family friendly facilities such as recreational facilities, toilets and parent rooms, child care, pedestrian and cycle paths etc were paramount. A large area of need identified was for improved communication of information about services and facilities available to the community. The Family Friendly Community would provide a significant mechanism for meeting this goal in relation to children and families.

Legislative Implications

The Local Government Act 1993 stipulates that council has the charter to exercise community leadership as well as to promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children.

In addition the Local Government (General) Regulation 1999 requires all councils in NSW to develop a social/community plan and report on identified access and equity activities in their annual report. Children are a mandated target group under the Planning and Reporting Guidelines (2002) for this regulation.

Policy Implications

Implications of council taking a leadership role in the development and promotion of Lithgow as a Family Friendly Community would be inclusion of the initiative in policy development across areas such as social planning, access and equity, and could take the form of a future policy statement which outlines the nature of council's philosophical and resource commitment to the initiative.

Financial Implications

Last year Council provided in kind and financial support to a number of activities which promoted and provided for the needs of children. Examples of this were through financial donation and advocacy support to community based children's services such as Gumnut House, through staff representation on and support for the Child Protection Interagency and through involvement in initiatives such as the Fatima Hall Homework Centre, the Reading Relay and the Community Fun

Days. The primary types of support to children and families provided by council have been in kind.

Whilst no additional support is being requested Council could consider a small financial contribution or assist with some further in kind assistance.

Conclusions

Council has a considerable opportunity to demonstrate community leadership by giving its backing and support to the Family Friendly Community initiative. This would have the effect of consolidating a number of already existing initiatives and has the potential to shape constructive change for the children and families of the Lithgow LGA well into the future.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council gives it's in principle endorsement to the Family Friendly Community initiative in Lithgow Local Government Area.
2. A Councillor be nominated to attend an initial meeting of a Family Friendly Action Group for the Lithgow LGA, with a view to forming an ongoing partnership with services committed to bring about the groups' objectives.
3. Council consider the ongoing provision of in kind resources to the project.

06- 56 RESOLVED

THAT:

1. Council gives it's in principle endorsement to the Family Friendly Community initiative in Lithgow Local Government Area.
2. Council nominate Mayor or his nominee to attend an initial meeting of a Family friendly Community Group Meeting for the Lithgow LGA, with a view of forming an ongoing partnership with services committed to bring about the groups objectives.
3. Council consider the ongoing provision of in kind resources to the project.

MOVED: Councillor M M Collins

SECONDED: Councillor B S Moran.

CARRIED

**ITEM:5 EPS - 06/03/06 - UPDATE OF STRATEGIC PLAN - OUR PLACE
 OUR FUTURE**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the monthly update of the progress of the Strategic Plan.

**COMMENTARY
 PROGRESS TO DATE**

LOCAL PROFILE AND INFORMATION REVIEW

- Local profiles are underway and due to be completed by early March, 2006.
- Government Authorities have been consulted through written and oral communication and comments have been received that will feed into the local profiles and issues papers.
- GIS data gaps have been identified and sourced from external agencies (namely Land & Property Information).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- The local community has been canvassed by the social research company (Market Facts (Qld)) setting up the Resident Feedback Register. The response to the initial telephone contact has been positive. There has been 400 packages sent out to residents to date and therefore it is expected that the quota of 200 will be easily met.
- Stage 1 of the community engagement plan will take place between March 6 -17. A number of visioning sessions will be held in the following locations;

DATE/DAY	TOWN	VENUE	TIME
Tuesday 7/3/06	Wallerawang	Wallerawang Public School Hall	7-9pm
Wednesday 8/3/06	Portland	Portland Central School Hall	7-9pm
Thursday 9/3/06	Hartley	Hartley Historic School	7-9pm
Monday 13/3/06	Lithgow/Bowenfels	Bowenfels Cottage	12-2pm
Tuesday 14/3/06	Rydal	Rydal Mount Conference Centre	7-9pm
Wednesday 15/3/06	Capertee	Capertee Community Hall	7-9pm
Thursday 16/3/06	Lithgow	Lithgow Workmen's Club	12.30pm – 9pm

These sessions will be facilitated by a specialist firm Twyford Consulting. These sessions will involve a brief presentation followed by an opportunity for participants to share their ideas. There will also be time for viewing displays and speaking one on one with Council representatives and planning consultants. Light refreshments will be available at these sessions.

The issues/questions to be explored at these sessions will include; *“Can you imagine what our area could be like in 10-20 years from now?” “What are our strengths and opportunities?” “What kind of future do we want?” “What ideas and concerns do you have?”*

All participants who provide their contact details will be supplied with a report about the visioning sessions and their outcomes.

A further visioning workshop will be held on the 22nd March, 2006. A cross-section of the community will be invited to participate in this workshop to draw together all information gathered from the earlier sessions.

These sessions have been widely advertised through advertisement in the local media, community posters, Council’s website and some letterbox drops carried out by the local progress associations. All Councillors and relevant Council staff are encouraged to attend some or all of these sessions to observe and actively listen to the voice of our community.

Interviews with key community groups and stakeholders will also occur over this two week period.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications arise from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Strategic Plan project is funded by the Planning Reform Funding Program. All costs associated with the community engagement plan and data acquisition is met by these funds.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

No legal implications arise from this report.

06- 57 RESOLVED

THAT the information be received.

MOVED: Councillor M J Wilson

SECONDED: Councillor W McAndrew.

CARRIED

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

Nil.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Nil.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nil.

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.