
PRESENT**Members:**

Councillor Peter Besseling (Mayor)
Councillor Rob Turner
Councillor Mike Cusato
Ross Cargill (Mid North Coast NSW Business Chamber)
Joy Corben (Port Macquarie-Hastings Education and Skills Forum)
Rob Hamilton (Greater Port Macquarie Tourism Association)
Anthony Thorne (Hastings Construction Industry Association Inc.)
Haydn Oriti (Port Macquarie Chamber of Commerce)

Other Attendees:

Craig Swift-McNair (General Manager)
Tricia Bulic (Director Community & Economic Growth)
Liesa Davies (Group Manager Economic Development)

Guests:

Matt Rogers (Director Development & Environment) - part meeting
Dan Croft (Group Manager Development Assessment) - part meeting

The meeting opened at 8.35am.

01 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Acknowledgement of Country was delivered.

02 APOLOGIES

CONSENSUS:

That the apologies received from Councillor Trevor Sargeant, Karen Archer, Professor Heather Cavanagh, John Saunders, Jill Follington and Belinda Richardson be accepted.

03 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

A quorum was not present for the Economic Development Steering Group Meeting on 6 July 2016 and therefore the meeting was not held.

CONSENSUS:

1. That it be noted that there was no Quorum and no Minutes taken for Economic Development Steering Group Meeting on 6 July 2016.
 2. That the Minutes of the Economic Development Steering Group Meeting held on 1 June 2016 be confirmed at the next meeting (date tba).
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04 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest presented.

05 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

As there was no Quorum at the Economic Development Steering Group Meeting on 6 July 2016, the Business Arising from Previous Minutes will be discussed at the next meeting of the Group (date tba).

06 NBN CO ROLLOUT UPDATE

CONSENSUS:

1. That the Group noted the apology from Ian Scott, Community Affairs Manager, NBN Co and that an invitation will be extended for Ian to brief a future meeting.
 2. That the Group note the short update provided by Group Manager Economic Development regarding the current status of the Port Macquarie-Hastings NBN planning, design and rollout.
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07 DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT UPDATE

The Group Manager Development Assessment presented on the trends in DA Applications and processing times over the past five years. He noted record numbers of applications were received by Council in 2015-2016, with a slight increase in gross processing time, which is being addressed through casual and temporary staff resourcing.

The Group Manager Development Assessment also noted a comparison of DA quantities demonstrated there was significantly more development activity in Port Macquarie compared to Coffs Harbour (and Tweed and Great Lakes regions).

Finally, the Group were briefed on agreed Council/industry priority actions underway as a result of the recommendations of the Land Development Approvals Review. Tony Thorne noted positive progress in this regard and good engagement via the Construction Industry Action Group.

CONSENSUS:

That the Group note the update on Port Macquarie Hastings Development Assessment activity.

08 DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS ASSESSMENT POLICY

The Director Development & Environment briefed the Group on results of recent trial changes in development contribution payments to support improved cash flow for small business. The trial changes have been received positively and are proposed for permanent incorporation in the revised Development Contributions Assessment Policy. He outlined that three further changes are also proposed - student accommodation contributions discount rate and contributions deferral provisions; review of contribution rates for storage premises.

CONSENSUS:

1. That the Group note the draft amendment to Council's Development Contributions Assessment Policy and consider providing comment.
2. That the Group note that feedback received in the exhibition period and the proposed amended policy will likely be reported to Council in October 2016.

09 DIGITAL STRATEGY - PUBLIC WIFI CONSIDERATION

The Group Manager Economic Development presented the findings of the recent assessment of potential public Wifi delivery models.

CONSENSUS:

1. That the Group note the outcomes of a recent assessment on potential public Wifi delivery models, and the proposal to undertake an expression of interest process to consider a trial town centre rollout.
2. That the Group support an EOI process and trial roll-out.
3. That a report on progress of potential public Wifi consideration be provided to the Group by end of 2016.

10 ORBITAL ROAD

The Mayor briefed the Group on the background and current status of the Orbital Road Project, stressing the importance of the project to Council and the desire to move forward with the feasibility study as soon as possible. The Mayor also noted the project's importance as an economic driver being a key link to our regional airport and other industry precincts.

Discussion ensued on Group and individual advocacy for feasibility study funding. Haydn Oriti, President of Port Macquarie Chamber of Commerce, noted the Orbital Road Project was rated the number one priority in the Top 10 local issues requiring advocacy by the Chamber at the recent 2016 Federal Election.

CONSENSUS:

1. That the Group note the briefing by Mayor Peter Besseling on the Orbital Road Project.
2. That the Group support the Orbital Road as an identified priority project for Council noting its significance to our region's future economic growth.

11 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY - QUARTERLY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Independent members of the Group congratulated Councillors and staff on the good work being undertaken and the tangible progress evident against the Economic Development Strategy and ongoing engagement by all Economic Development Steering Group members.

The Chair extended his thanks to all involved - both Council staff and Steering Group Members.

CONSENSUS:

That the Group note the update on progress against the 2016 Economic Development Strategy priorities.

12 NEXT MEETING

CONSENSUS

That the next meeting of the Economic Development Steering Group be held on a date to be confirmed following the Local Government elections on 10 September 2016.

13 GENERAL BUSINESS

13.01 - Upcoming Meeting with Federal Member for Cowper:

Haydn Oriti noted the upcoming meeting with the Federal Member for Cowper, Mayors and General Managers to discuss the Federal Jobs and Investment Programme.

The meeting closed at 10.20am.