

Extraordinary Council

Business Paper

date of meeting: Wednesday 22 January 2020

location: Council Chambers
17 Burrawan Street
Port Macquarie

time: 5:30pm

Community Vision

A sustainable high quality of life for all

Community Mission

Building the future together
People Place Health Education Technology

Council's Corporate Values

- ★ Sustainability
- ★ Excellence in Service Delivery
- ★ Consultation and Communication
- ★ Openness and Accountability
- ★ Community Advocacy

Community Themes

- ★ Leadership and Governance
- ★ Your Community Life
- ★ Your Business and Industry
- ★ Your Natural and Built Environment

Extraordinary Council Meeting

Wednesday, 22 January 2020

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Item: 01**Subject: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

"I acknowledge that we are gathered on Birpai Land. I pay respect to the Birpai Elders both past and present. I also extend that respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present."

Item: 02**Subject: APOLOGIES**

RECOMMENDATION

That the apologies received be accepted.

Item: 03
Subject: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

RECOMMENDATION

That Disclosures of Interest be presented

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST DECLARATION

Name of Meeting:	
Meeting Date:	
Item Number:	
Subject:	
I, the undersigned, hereby declare the following interest:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pecuniary: Take no part in the consideration and voting and be out of sight of the meeting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Pecuniary – Significant Interest: Take no part in the consideration and voting and be out of sight of the meeting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Pecuniary – Less than Significant Interest: May participate in consideration and voting.
For the reason that:	
Name:	Date:
Signed:	
Please submit to the Governance Support Officer at the Council Meeting.	

(Refer to next page and the Code of Conduct)

Pecuniary Interest

- 4.1 A pecuniary interest is an interest that you have in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to you or a person referred to in clause 4.3.
- 4.2 You will not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision you might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 4.6.
- 4.3 For the purposes of this Part, you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is:
- your interest, or
 - the interest of your spouse or de facto partner, your relative, or your partner or employer, or
 - a company or other body of which you, or your nominee, partner or employer, is a shareholder or member.
- 4.4 For the purposes of clause 4.3:
- Your "relative" is any of the following:
 - your parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
 - your spouse's or de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child
 - the spouse or de facto partner of a person referred to in paragraphs (i) and (i)
 - "de facto partner" has the same meaning as defined in section 21C of the *Interpretation Act 1987*.
- 4.5 You will not have a pecuniary interest in relation to a person referred to in subclauses 4.3(b) or (c)
- if you are unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of your spouse, de facto partner, relative, partner, employer or company or other body, or
 - just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, a council or a statutory body, or is employed by the Crown, or
 - just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of a council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter, so long as the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

Non-Pecuniary

- 5.1 Non-pecuniary interests are private or personal interests a council official has that do not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in clause 4.1 of this code. These commonly arise out of family or personal relationships, or out of involvement in sporting, social, religious or other cultural groups and associations, and may include an interest of a financial nature.
- 5.2 A non-pecuniary conflict of interest exists where a reasonable and informed person would perceive that you could be influenced by a private interest when carrying out your official functions in relation to a matter.
- 5.3 The personal or political views of a council official do not constitute a private interest for the purposes of clause 5.2.
- 5.4 Non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be identified and appropriately managed to uphold community confidence in the probity of council decision-making. The onus is on you to identify any non-pecuniary conflict of interest you may have in matters that you deal with, to disclose the interest fully and in writing, and to take appropriate action to manage the conflict in accordance with this code.
- 5.5 When considering whether or not you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter you are dealing with, it is always important to think about how others would view your situation.

Managing non-pecuniary conflicts of interest

- 5.6 Where you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter for the purposes of clause 5.2, you must disclose the relevant private interest you have in relation to the matter fully and in writing as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the non-pecuniary conflict of interest and on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to the matter. In the case of members of council staff other than the general manager, such a disclosure is to be made to the staff member's manager. In the case of the general manager, such a disclosure is to be made to the mayor.
- 5.7 If a disclosure is made at a council or committee meeting, both the disclosure and the nature of the interest must be recorded in the minutes on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises. This disclosure constitutes disclosure in writing for the purposes of clause 5.6.
- 5.8 How you manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest will depend on whether or not it is significant.
- 5.9 As a general rule, a non-pecuniary conflict of interest will be significant where it does not involve a pecuniary interest for the purposes of clause 4.1, but it involves:
- a relationship between a council official and another person who is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that is particularly close, such as a current or former spouse or de facto partner, a relative for the purposes of clause 4.4 or another person from the council official's extended family that the council official has a close personal relationship with, or another person living in the same household
 - other relationships with persons who are affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that are particularly close, such as friendships and business relationships. Closeness is defined by the nature of the friendship or business relationship, the frequency of contact and the duration of the friendship or relationship.
 - an affiliation between the council official and an organisation (such as a sporting body, club, religious, cultural or charitable organisation, corporation or association) that is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that is particularly strong. The strength of a council official's affiliation with an organisation is to be determined by the extent to which they actively participate in the management, administration or other activities of the organisation.
 - membership, as the council's representative, of the board or management committee of an organisation that is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration, in circumstances where the interests of the council and the organisation are potentially in conflict in relation to the particular matter
 - a financial interest (other than an interest of a type referred to in clause 4.6) that is not a pecuniary interest for the purposes of clause 4.1
 - the conferral or loss of a personal benefit other than one conferred or lost as a member of the community or a broader class of people affected by a decision.
- 5.10 Significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be managed in one of two ways:
- by not participating in consideration of, or decision making in relation to, the matter in which you have the significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest and the matter being allocated to another person for consideration or determination, or
 - if the significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to a matter under consideration at a council or committee meeting, by managing the conflict of interest as if you had a pecuniary interest in the matter by complying with clauses 4.28 and 4.29.
- 5.11 If you determine that you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter that is not significant and does not require further action, when disclosing the interest you must also explain in writing why you consider that the non-pecuniary conflict of interest is not significant and does not require further action in the circumstances.
- 5.12 If you are a member of staff of council other than the general manager, the decision on which option should be taken to manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest must be made in consultation with and at the direction of your manager. In the case of the general manager, the decision on which option should be taken to manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest must be made in consultation with and at the direction of the mayor.
- 5.13 Despite clause 5.10(b), a councillor who has a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter, may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.
- 5.14 Council committee members are not required to declare and manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in accordance with the requirements of this Part where it arises from an interest they have as a person chosen to represent the community, or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group, if they have been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the council committee.

SPECIAL DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST DECLARATION

*This form must be completed using block letters or typed.
If there is insufficient space for all the information you are required to disclose,
you must attach an appendix which is to be properly identified and signed by you.*

By <i>[insert full name of councillor]</i>	
In the matter of <i>[insert name of environmental planning instrument]</i>	
Which is to be considered at a meeting of the <i>[insert name of meeting]</i>	
Held on <i>[insert date of meeting]</i>	
PECUNIARY INTEREST	
Address of the affected principal place of residence of the councillor or an associated person, company or body <i>(the identified land)</i>	
Relationship of identified land to councillor <i>[Tick or cross one box.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> The councillor has interest in the land (e.g. is owner or has other interest arising out of a mortgage, lease, trust, option or contract, or otherwise). <input type="checkbox"/> An associated person of the councillor has an interest in the land. <input type="checkbox"/> An associated company or body of the councillor has interest in the land.
MATTER GIVING RISE TO PECUNIARY INTEREST¹	
Nature of land that is subject to a change in zone/planning control by proposed LEP <i>(the subject land²)</i> <i>[Tick or cross one box]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> The identified land. <input type="checkbox"/> Land that adjoins or is adjacent to or is in proximity to the identified land.
Current zone/planning control <i>[Insert name of current planning instrument and identify relevant zone/planning control applying to the subject land]</i>	
Proposed change of zone/planning control <i>[Insert name of proposed LEP and identify proposed change of zone/planning control applying to the subject land]</i>	
Effect of proposed change of zone/planning control on councillor or associated person <i>[Tick or cross one box]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Appreciable financial gain. <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciable financial loss.

[If more than one pecuniary interest is to be declared, reprint the above box and fill in for each additional interest]

Councillor's Signature: **Date:**

This form is to be retained by the council's general manager and included in full in the minutes of the meeting

Last Updated: 3 June 2019

Important Information

This information is being collected for the purpose of making a special disclosure of pecuniary interests under clause 4.36(c) of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Code of Conduct).

The special disclosure must relate only to a pecuniary interest that a councillor has in the councillor's principal place of residence, or an interest another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct) has in that person's principal place of residence.

Clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct states that you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter because of the pecuniary interest of your spouse or your de facto partner or your relative or because your business partner or employer has a pecuniary interest. You will also have a pecuniary interest in a matter because you, your nominee, your business partner or your employer is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

"Relative" is defined by clause 4.4 of the Model Code of Conduct as meaning your, your spouse's or your de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child and the spouse or de facto partner of any of those persons.

You must not make a special disclosure that you know or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular. Complaints about breaches of these requirements are to be referred to the Office of Local Government and may result in disciplinary action by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This form must be completed by you before the commencement of the council or council committee meeting at which the special disclosure is being made. The completed form must be tabled at the meeting. Everyone is entitled to inspect it. The special disclosure must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

¹ Clause 4.1 of the Model Code of Conduct provides that a pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person. A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 4.6 of the Model Code of Conduct.

² A pecuniary interest may arise by way of a change of permissible use of land adjoining, adjacent to or in proximity to land in which a councillor or a person, company or body referred to in clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct has a proprietary interest

4 Your Natural and Built Environment

What we are trying to achieve

A connected, sustainable, accessible community and environment that is protected now and into the future.

What the result will be

We will have:

- Effective management and maintenance of essential water, waste and sewer infrastructure
- A community that is prepared for natural events and climate change
- Sustainable and environmentally sensitive development outcomes that consider the impact on the natural environment
- Accessible transport network for our communities
- Infrastructure provision and maintenance that meets community expectations and needs
- Well planned communities that are linked to encourage and manage growth
- Accessible and protected waterways, foreshores, beaches and bushlands
- An environment that is protected and conserved for future generations
- Renewable energy options that are understood and accessible by the community

How we will get there

- 4.1 Provide (appropriate) infrastructure and services including water cycle management, waste management, and sewer management
- 4.2 Aim to minimise the impact of natural events and climate change, for example, floods, bushfires and coastal erosion
- 4.3 Facilitate development that is compatible with the natural and built environment
- 4.4 Plan for integrated transport systems that help people get around and link our communities
- 4.5 Plan for integrated and connected communities across the Port Macquarie-Hastings area
- 4.6 Restore and protect natural areas
- 4.7 Provide leadership in the development of renewable energy opportunities
- 4.8 Increase awareness of issues affecting our environment, including the preservation of flora and fauna



Item: 07.01

Subject: WATER RESTRICTIONS - LEVEL 4

Presented by: Infrastructure, Dan Bylsma

Alignment with Delivery Program

4.1.1 Plan, investigate, design and construct water supply assets ensuring health, safety, environmental protection and security of supply for the future growth of the region.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Implement Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions in response to continuing intense drought conditions, for residential use on 28 January 2020, which ban all outdoor use of drinking water.**
- 2. Noting the potential significant impacts of Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions on commercial users, delay implementation of Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions on commercial users until 25 February 2020, allowing time for engagement to take place between Council and commercial users on water saving measures that will assist to minimise the economic impact of these water restrictions on businesses.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide relevant information to Council in relation to the current water storage levels for the Port Macquarie-Hastings Local Government Area (LGA) and to outline what the restrictions are for residential and commercial users when moving to Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries currently identifies the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council LGA as being in 'Intense Drought'. With limited rainfall on the horizon, Council endorsed the early implementation of Level 3 Water Restrictions from 25 November 2019.

The Bureau of Meteorology indicates that February to April has roughly equal chances of being wetter or drier than average for most of Australia. While outlooks for drier than average conditions have eased compared to those issued for late 2019, several months of above average rainfall are needed to see a recovery from current long-term rainfall deficiencies. With record low rainfall throughout 2019 and the uncertain rainfall outlook for February to April, reliance on our stored water remains over this period. It is anticipated that river flows enabling daily extraction to Cowarra Dam would be required for at least 4 months to replenish total combined storage levels above the 45% needed to relax Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions.

Since November 2019 the total combined water storage level has dropped to 39% (as at 20 January 2020). In light of this, it is now proposed to move to Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions for residential and commercial use prior to the adopted trigger level of 355 being reached, in an effort to further reduce overall demand and extend the water availability from our current limited water storages.

Noting the potential significant impacts of Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions on commercial users, it is proposed to delay the implementation of Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions for commercial users until 25 February 2020. During this time, Council staff will engage with businesses around water saving measures that can be implemented, in order to minimise the economic impact these restrictions may have on some businesses.

While the area has experienced good rainfall over recent days at the time of writing this report, it will take further above average rainfall and sustained extraction from the Hastings River to replenish total combined storage levels above the 45% needed to relax the Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions.

Discussion

The Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (PMHC) Water Supply Policy 2015 (further amended 4 December 2018), under sections 2.2.5 - Restrictions during Drought or Emergency Situations, includes that:

PMHC may interrupt, limit or place restrictions on the supply of water including:

- the purposes for which the water can be used, or
- the times when the water can be used, or
- the methods by which the water can be used, or
- the quantities of the water that can be used.

These restrictions may be applied if there is a drought, or if the available stored water, or the available capacity of supply, is so limited as to make extraordinary measures necessary in the general interest of water consumers.

A link to Council's Water Supply Policy 2015 is as follows:

<https://www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au/About-Us/Publications/Council-Codes-and-Policies-Register>

As per the Water Supply Policy, if restrictions are to be applied, Council will publish a notice in a newspaper circulating within the LGA.

Council adopted revised water restriction trigger levels, in line with the 2014 Uniform Regional Water Restrictions at the Ordinary Council meeting of 20 July 2016. The purpose of the Uniform Regional Water Restrictions is to ensure water restriction trigger levels adopted by adjoining Councils have the same meaning. In the past, individual Councils have adopted unique water restriction trigger levels.

These trigger levels and general restrictions for residential outdoor use are as follows:

Level	Restrictions - Residential outdoor component	Trigger Point (% of combined storage)
Water conservation measures	No unattended hoses between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm	Not applicable
1 Moderate	Micro sprays and drippers / sub-surface can be used for a maximum of 15 minutes and hand held hoses can be used for 1 hour every second day, between the hours of 4:00pm and 9:00am on odd or even days matching house numbering system. Other irrigation and unattended hoses banned	70%
2 High	Micro sprays and drippers / sub-surface can be used for a maximum of 15 minutes and hand held hoses can be used for ½ an hour every second day, between the hours of 4:00pm and 9:00am on odd or even days matching house numbering system. Other irrigation and unattended hoses banned	60%
3 Very High	No irrigation permitted. Use of buckets any time or hand held hoses for a maximum of 10 minutes every second day between the hours of 4:00pm and 9:00am on odd or even days matching house numbering system	45%
4 Severe	All external use of potable water banned. Grey water use only	35%
Emergency	As directed by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	25%

The need for Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions

The collective efforts of our community in conserving water under the first 3 Levels of Water Restrictions throughout 2019 has provided Council with the ability to extend water availability, however the prolonged drought period, bushfire fighting and limited rainfall enabling extraction from the Hastings River has seen water storage approaching unprecedented levels. The recommended move to Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions signals a further commitment to water demand management in order to prolong current water supplies. Furthermore, should there be no additional water extraction opportunities and if consumption remains consistent with our current demand, we will need to consider moving to Emergency Water Restrictions within the next 2 months.

The aim of Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions is to reduce overall demand by 20% or around 4-5 megalitres (ML) per day. To ensure commitment from all water users, Council have developed end user Information Guides for Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions to cover both residential and commercial users, as well as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to provide guidance for our community on specific uses and restrictions as detailed below:

For Residential Use

- *There is a total ban on all outdoor residential water use.*
- - Only use buckets or watering cans containing recycled, grey water or rainwater on gardens.
 - No handheld hoses, sprinklers, micro-sprays or drip irrigation systems.



- No car or boat washing. Boat motor flushing is only permitted for 3 minutes using a container to recycle flushing water.
- No cleaning driveways, paths or hardstand areas. Cleaning for health or safety reasons can only be undertaken via written exemption from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.
- No swimming pool top-ups with town water. Consult your pool supplier for advice on managing your pool equipment.
- New pools may be filled to 300mm below the skimmer box to prevent structural damage via written exemption approval from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.
- No exemptions for establishing new turf are available from Council.

All restrictions apply to any rainwater tank where mains water top up or automatic changeover devices are in use or tank is filled via Mobile Water Tanker delivery. No restriction applies to rainwater collected in rainwater tanks.

For Public Areas

- Sporting fields can only use recycled water.
- Community gardens can only use recycled or rainwater.
- There is a total ban on top-ups for fountains and garden ponds.
- Public swimming pool top-ups are permitted provided water-use reduction measures are undertaken.
- Public outdoor showers, fish cleaning tables and boat cleaning areas will be disabled.

For Commercial Use

Water use is limited to critical commercial use only.

- **Nurseries, market gardens, landscapers and turf suppliers:** Must apply for written exemption from Council for water use, demonstrating how water saving will be achieved and why alternate water sources are not available.
- **Bowling Greens and golf courses:** Recycled water only.
- **Construction industry:** Minimise all water use on the work site. Hoses must be fitted with a hand-held cut-off trigger or control nozzle that shuts off when released.
- **Public pools:** Top ups are permitted with water-use reduction measures.
- **Commercial cleaning:** Permitted for health and safety reasons only or via written exemption from Council.
- **Car, boat and caravan dealers and detailers:** Use of recycled water or handwashing with buckets is permitted for safety reasons e.g. windscreens and lights.
- **Washing of buses, taxis and emergency services vehicles:** Use of recycled water or handwashing with buckets is permitted for safety reasons e.g. windscreens and lights.
- **Commercial car wash:** Facilities must use recycled water where available. Use of drinking water for commercial car wash requires a Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP) and written exemption from Council.

- **Industries requiring water for hygiene purposes:** No restrictions for commercial kitchens, garbage trucks, food transport etc. to ensure health standards are maintained.
- **Washing down of hard areas, driveways, roofs, walls and paths:** Permitted for health and safety reasons only with written exemption from Council. Efficient high pressure, low flow rate cleaners with trigger control are to be used.
- **Primary Production:** Washing animals using a bucket or handheld hose fitted with cut-off trigger or control nozzle is permitted for health and safety reasons only. Clean pet pens using recycled or greywater only. Recycled water is approved for livestock (excluding pigs and cleaning of milking equipment) and will require a site management plan to be approved. Recycled water has limited daily availability.
- **Tourist accommodation:** Use of water outside is not permitted. Pool top-ups are permitted subject to implementation of WSAP and written exemption from Council.
- **Road works and land developments:** Recycled water only. Use of drinking water for road works and land developments requires WSAP and written exemption from Council.

For all other commercial use, refer to the **RESIDENTIAL Water Restrictions Information Guide**.

Exemption process

Residential or commercial customers who are unable to comply with the Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions are required to apply for an exemption. Exemption requests will be received via an Exemption Application Form available on Council's website or from local Council offices.

A member of the Water Supply Team will assess each request on an individual basis. Consideration around granting exemptions will be given to those uses outlined in the Residential and Commercial Information Guides and further, in commercial circumstances where there are demonstrated water saving measures in place or underway.

The intent is for Council to provide written responses to Residential or Commercial Exemption requests within 10 working days, outlining the approval or decline on the request, or if any further information is required.

In addition to this, staff from the Engagement, Education and Water Supply Teams will work with residents and businesses to reduce their water use by assisting in completing a Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP). As an example, a WSAP that can demonstrate improved water efficiency in line with targeted reductions under Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions could support an Exemption Application from a Residential or Commercial customer.

Copies of Residential and Commercial Information Guides, FAQs and samples of the Exemption Application and Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP) and exemption process are saved as attachments to this report. Please note these documents are still in draft and will be finalised in the coming days.

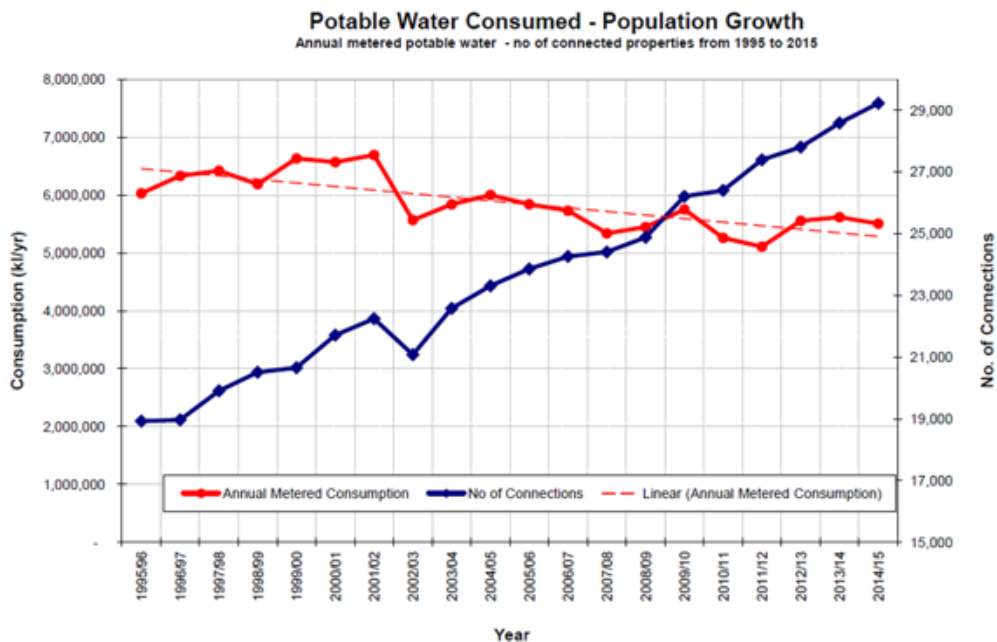
Relaxing of restrictions

According to the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM 16/1/2020), for the remainder of January, a wetter than average week is likely across much of eastern Australia. February to April has roughly equal chances of being wetter or drier than average for most of Australia. This means there is no strong push towards wetter or drier than average conditions for the coming three months for most of the country. While outlooks for drier than average conditions have eased compared to those issued for late 2019, several months of above average rainfall are needed to see a recovery from current long-term rainfall deficiencies. It is anticipated that river flows enabling daily extraction to Cowarra Dam would be required for at least 4 months to replenish total combined storage levels above the 45% needed to relax Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions.

Impacts of growth on demand

Growth over the last 20 years has seen a large number of new connections on the water supply network, however the demand on the water supply has remained relatively steady with a slight downward trend in line with improved water conservation measures and greater community awareness of the need to conserve water.

The graph below shows the relationship between the number of metered connections on the water supply network, as an indicator of population, to the annual consumption over a 15 year period between 1995 and 2015. It shows that while there has been over 50% more connections on the network there has been an approximately 9% decrease in demand.



While our LGA has seen a large increase in population there hasn't been the same level of increase on the water supply demand. The water supply schemes for our



area are dependent on river flows with two off-creek storage dams in reserve, which provide approximately 625 to 730 days of storage and with 2019 being one of, if not the driest year on record, this has largely contributed to the need to introduce water restrictions as dam storage levels decrease. Also during dry times, the number of users drawing water from the dam supply increases as properties that solely rely on rainwater start needing to have water delivered via tanker from the town water supply.

In order to adequately plan for the predicted future population growth, Council has engaged Public Works Advisory to complete an Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) strategy to outline the long-term plans for the water and sewer schemes and strategic stormwater management. This will effectively provide an Options Report for any future projects over a 30-year horizon, with an investment of approximately \$500Million worth of capital works over that time.

A key first step of this project is a water secure yield analysis that looks at future population growth and climate modelling, as recommended by the CSIRO, to determine the relevant secure yield figures and solutions to achieve the determined secure water yield for the predicted population out to 2050. Secure yield is defined as the highest annual water demand that can be supplied from our water supply system whilst meeting specific design rules. Water security is achieved if the secure yield of a water supply is at least equal to the unrestricted dry year annual demand.

Council's current water supply system is appropriate for our growing population as determined by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment under the NSW Guidelines on Assuring Future Urban Water Security.

Another element of reducing the demand on the drinking water supply is the use of recycled water, which Council has gained approval for irrigation, toilet flushing, truck/car washing, laundry, industrial and commercial construction, dust suppression and for agriculture and livestock use (excluding pigs and cleaning of milking equipment). Council is working on completing the current approved domestic recycled water systems, with construction completed on the Bonny Hills Recycled Water Supply Mains and construction commencing in early 2020 on the interim Thrumster Recycled Water Supply Mains connection to deliver recycled water to these areas.

Alternative Water Supply Security

Noting the reliance on river flows for water supply, Council is currently investigating alternative water supply solutions to cover the demand (under water restrictions) during times of extreme dry weather, as well as solutions to filter poor quality water from the Hastings River during high flows following large rain events.

Investigation of technical solutions involve the following:

- Temporary filtration plant to enable Council to extract from the Hastings River even with poor water quality. This plant can also treat the poor water quality risk at Cowarra Dam as water levels drop.
- Upgrade of the Wauchope Water Treatment - Current capacity of this plant is 7ML/day with the upgrade ensuring 21ML/day capacity. This will enable dirty

water to be extracted from the river, treated and pumped directly into the reticulation system. Once this upgrade is complete, the above temporary solution can be repurposed as part of a desalination plant.

- Desalination Plant - a desalination plant in the order of 20ML/day has been identified as being required as a reliable alternative supply and will be required in the event insufficient rainfall continues over the coming months.

Further information on actions to provide a secure water supply during prolonged dry periods, such as those currently being experienced, will be provided in a report to the February 2020 Council Meeting.

Investment in Water Infrastructure

Over the last five years Council has invested over \$41.3 Million in water infrastructure to improve the supply network. Key projects include the construction of the Sancrox Reservoir and continuing the construction of the Southern Arm Trunk Main and Port Macquarie Recycled Water Treatment Plant upgrade.

Strategic planning via the IWCM process has identified a future investment of approximately \$300Million in water infrastructure over the next 10 to 20 years to continue to provide a secure water supply.

Options

Council can resolve in line with the recommendation included in this report, or resolve in some other manner.

Community Engagement & Internal Consultation

Council's Engagement, Education and Communications (EEC) Teams are continuing to work with Water Supply staff to develop a comprehensive EEC Plan of activities associated with moving both residents and commercial users to higher level water restrictions ahead of adopted triggers.

The key objectives of the EEC Plan are to:

- Communicate that Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions are in place.
- Educate and inform the community of Level 4 Severe Water Restriction requirements.
- Educate and inform the community about responsible water use and everyone's responsibility in conserving our precious water resource i.e. encouraging behaviour change.

A multi-channel communications approach (including social, television, radio, print media and outdoor signage) will be adopted to ensure broad awareness across the LGA.

This communications activity will take place alongside a community engagement and education program including outdoor/community pop-ups, face-to-face meetings and/or direct mail with industry and community groups; school workshops and education resources.

An online portal (Water Hub) including a range of resources and tools e.g. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), water updates, videos, water saving tips and Water Savings Action Plan is also being developed to support residents and commercial customers.

Further to this and as mentioned earlier in this report, members of the Engagement and Education Teams will work with Water Supply staff to specifically consult and engage with key commercial operators ahead of the implementation of Level 4 Severe Commercial Water Restrictions to:

- Advise them of the restrictions applicable to their business;
- Educate them on ways to reduce water use in their business by completing a Water Savings Action Plan; and
- Inform them of the exemption process (where applicable).

The intention is to reduce overall commercial water use whilst, wherever possible minimising economic impacts on our local businesses.

Planning & Policy Implications

Should Council support the recommendations as included in this report, it should be noted that this will vary from the current Water Supply Policy. As also detailed in this report, any move to Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions will include broad engagement with commercial users as well as a detailed Engagement, Education and Communications Plan.

Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions documentation is attached for information (Attachments 1-6) and will form part of future updates to the Water Supply policy.

Updates on the total combined storage levels will continue to be updated weekly on the Council website.

Financial & Economic Implications

Should Council support this recommendation, any reduction in water usage will result in a reduction of water revenue from water consumption usage charges Tier 1 and Tier 2. Level 4 Water Restrictions is targeting a 20% reduction in water usage across the scheme. This reduction target is the total including all previous restriction levels which, if achieved would result in a minimum 20% reduction in water usage revenue compared with nil water restriction revenue. Further details on the usage charges are contained within the Water Supply Policy 2015 (further amended 4 December 2018) and in the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2019-2020.

With further employment and economic growth remaining an important objective for the region, Council staff will seek to minimise the economic impact of Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions by proactively working with local businesses to implement measures that will reduce their water consumption. Key efforts include a rolling triage, audit and engagement with the region's largest commercial water users, alongside implementation of Water Savings Action Plans for key industries. Exemptions are expected to be granted for necessary outdoor use of water for core business - noting many local industries are also recovering from the indirect impact of

the recent serious bushfires. Level 4 Severe Water Restrictions are expected to impact on water use for commercial customers, however it is important Council seeks to prevent immediate or ongoing employment losses from the proposed changes.

Attachments

1. [Residential Information Guide](#)
2. [Commercial Information Guide](#)
3. [FAQs](#)
4. [Exemption Application](#)
5. [Water Saving Action Plan](#)
6. [Exemption Process](#)