



Ordinary Council

LATE REPORTS

Business Paper

date of meeting: Thursday 18 April 2024

location: Council Chambers, 17 Burrawan Street, Port Macquarie

time: 10: 00am

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Sustainability ★ Excellence in Service Delivery ★ Consultation and Communication ★ Openness and Accountability ★ Community Advocacy
Community Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Leadership and Governance ★ Your Community Life ★ Your Business and Industry ★ Your Natural and Built Environment

Under Clause 3.23 Statement of ethical Obligations in the Code of Meeting Practice as adopted by Council at the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 June 2022 (Item 6.04), business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Councillors are reminded of the oath or affirmation which was taken by each of them on 10 January 2022.

Oath Of Councillor

I swear that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Port Macquarie-Hastings local government area and the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and that I will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of my ability and judgment.

Affirmation Of Councillor

I solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Port Macquarie-Hastings local government area and the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and that I will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of my ability and judgment.

Councillors have the opportunity to declare any interests in items on the agenda and inform the Council and public if they will be leaving the Chambers during the debate and voting on the item.

Ordinary Council Meeting

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Items of Business

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Item: 07.01

Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE - PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS FERRY SERVICE

Mayor, Peta Pinson

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the correspondence sent to The Hon Jenny Aitchison MP, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, regarding operation of the two vehicular ferries over the Hastings River.
2. Note the inconsistency in the provision of ferry services by Transport NSW, particularly highlighting the recent transfer of management of the Lower Portland Ferry to the NSW Government, continues to disadvantage the community of the Port Macquarie-Hastings.
3. Note Port Macquarie-Hastings Council continues to fund ferry services across the Hastings River, whilst most other vehicular ferry services in NSW are provided by the NSW Government or receive funding support.
4. Request the Chief Executive Officer write to the Federal Member for Cowper, The Hon. Pat Conaghan; and the Member for Port Macquarie, The Hon. Leslie Williams MP, seeking their support to strongly advocate with the NSW Government to assume management or provide funding support for the operation of vehicular ferry services that connect public roads in NSW, including the vehicular ferries that operate across the Hastings River.

Discussion

In 2023 and 2024 Port Macquarie-Hastings Council made seven submissions to Transport NSW and the NSW Government around funding and management of the Hastings River vehicular ferries.

To date, we have received responses which have stated Transport for NSW has no plans to take over the management of the Hasting River vehicular ferries and, given the financial position of the Government and financial commitments to be fulfilled, are not in a position to take on the operation and maintenance of the ferry services.

Subsequently we have found other NSW ferry services are being completely or partially funded, or transitioning to being managed, by the NSW Government.





The Hasting River vehicular ferries provide an essential link for commuters, tourists, emergency services and our North Shore community, connecting the local road network with the regional road network. These services are funded by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, at a significant cost to users and our broader community who pay rates.

With the majority of other vehicular ferry services in NSW provided by the NSW Government, the recent announcement of another ferry service, once managed by local councils, being taken over by the NSW Government is extremely hard to fathom. This decision by the NSW Government relates to the Lower Portland ferry service, which crosses the Hawkesbury River. This inconsistency in provision of ferry services directly disadvantages our community and highlights a clear inequity in the provision of vehicular ferry services across our state.

Whilst our Council continues to prudently manage our ferry services the cost impact on users and the local community continues to increase as it is essential for Council to continue to raise charges, or consider service level reductions, to fund major investment in ferry infrastructure in need of renewal.

In the instance of the Lower Portland ferry service, it is apparent the State and Federal Members have supported advocacy with regard to the NSW Government taking over management of the service. Whilst in the instance of the Hastings River ferries Council has been advocating strongly with the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, The Hon Jenny Aitchison MP, support for this advocacy via our Local Members provides a further avenue to seek the NSW Government's intervention to assume management or provide funding support for these ferry services.

Attachments

1.  Correspondence - CEO to Minister Aitchinson - PMHC Ferry Service - Lower Portland Ferry - 2024 04 11
2.  Correspondence Response - PMHC CEO to Minister Aitchinson - PMHC Ferry Service - 2024 04 10
3.  Correspondence Response - Hon Jenny Aitchison to CEO - Lorne Road and Ferry Services - 2024 04 10
4.  Correspondence Response - Hon Jenny Aitchison to CEO -Operation and maintenance of the Hibbard and Settlement Point ferries PMHC letter - 2024 02 29

Item: 07.02

Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE - IPWEA ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Mayor, Peta Pinson

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note the success of nominations at the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia NSW/ACT Engineering Excellence Awards held on 11 April 2024 for the following projects:**
 - (a) **Winner - Category 2 New or Improved Techniques category - Rawdon Island Bridge Rehabilitation project.**
 - (b) **Highly Commended - Category 8 Multi-Disciplinary Project Management - Gordon Street Upgrade project.**
 - (c) **Highly Commended - Category 1C Design and Construction of a public works project greater than \$5 million - Cairncross Waste Management project.**
2. **Congratulate the Chief Executive Officer, Dr Clare Allen, and the staff involved in delivering the projects and preparing the nominations for the Awards.**

Discussion

At the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) NSW/ACT Engineering Excellence Awards held in the Hunter Valley on 11 April 2024, Council was successful in winning one Award Category and being Highly Commended in two other Award Categories.

Congratulations is extended to the Chief Executive Officer, Dr Clare Allen, and all the staff involved in these successful projects. Special thanks also to the staff who prepared the nominations for the Awards. This is a wonderful achievement and has shone a bright light on our Council.

Although not successful, it should be noted that Council also submitted award nominations for the Bicentennial Walkway project, the Comboyne Wastewater Treatment Plant Aeration Control improvement project and the upgrades to Bago Road which all were very worthy of nomination.

A brief outline of each of the successful award projects is provided below:

Winner - Category 2 New or Improved Techniques Category - Rehabilitation of Rawdon Island Bridge

The rehabilitation of Rawdon Island Bridge was one of Council's most challenging feats.

This project combined the complexities of potential catastrophic bridge failure, an isolated community, and unique logistical challenges combined with innovative research and design, an endangered species, and a time-critical program. During underwater dive inspections, Council discovered major degradation of the foundations, with up to 90% section loss across multiple piles. It triggered an immediate emergency response to close the bridge.

What followed was a complex project to manage community needs and public safety, prevent bridge collapse, and work to solve the engineering challenge.

While completing innovating modelling and monitoring of the bridge capacity, Council investigated and designed several alternative access options. Within weeks, measures were in place to restore resident access for light vehicles.

The ultimate solution was chosen, with approvals and designs fast-tracked, and critical underwater repairs completed within 6 months from discovery.

Highly Commended - Category 8 Multi-Disciplinary Project Management - Gordon Street Upgrade

The multi-million dollar upgrade of Gordon Street, Port Macquarie, is one of the largest road improvement projects Council has delivered to-date.

Gordon Street is considered one of the top-five busiest roads in the region, carrying upwards of 30,000 motorists a day.

With a need to address ageing infrastructure both above and below the road surface, Council embarked on a major engineering and logistical challenge combining all aspects of project management, design and engineering for multiple infrastructure services - water, stormwater, and pavement upgrades, whilst also providing continuity for business operators and commercial community stakeholders.

Above ground, Council delivered a safer, smoother ride along Gordon Street with improved pedestrian safety, traffic flow and flooding infrastructure, while below ground, improvements have been made to future-proof Council's delivery of drinking water to the community, and upgraded stormwater services and management along the road.

It should be noted that the design for this project was completed utilising internal design staff and really highlights the technical strength of our organisation.

Highly Commended - Category 1C Design and Construction of a Public Works Project Greater than \$5Million - Cairncross Waste Management Facility

The current landfill area of the Cairncross Landfill, operated by Council was expected to reach capacity by early 2022.

The Cairncross Landfill Expansion - Sub-Stages 1A, 1C & 1E project was essential to address the future waste disposal requirements of our Local Government Area. This equates to 640,000 m cubed of volume. This follows the conclusion of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and subsequent receipt of Development

Consent on 5 November 2019 to proceed with the Cairncross Waste Management Facility Expansion.

Construction of the upgrade works were undertaken. Our designer SMEC stated it was the quickest delivery of a landfill project from initiation through construction to completion that they were aware of, totalling 21 months turnaround. Completion of the project allowed Council to alleviate an immediate risk of the existing landfill cells reaching capacity.

Attachments

Nil