

PRESENT: Ron Gillis, Mark Brown, Karen Weatherall, Cllr Anne-Louise Capel, Zoe Holcombe, Mary Milsom, Maree Denman, Michael Wood, David Hunter, Brett England, Lynne Walden, Betty Evans, Mary Cooper, Chris Walton, Narda Abel, Joel Amiet, Guy Andrews, Narelle Andrews, Ian Adams, Allison Reynolds, Loretta Pulham, Vonda Ashton, Dianne Dow, Tony Cole, Cllr Ambrose Doolan, Cllr Aniello Iannuzzi, Cllr Kodi Brady, Max Estens, Lynne Estens, Leeanne Ryan (A/General Manager), Kevin Tighe (Director Technical Services), Aileen Bell (A/Director Development Services), Michael Jones (A/Director Corporate and Community Services), Louise Johnson (Manager Children's and Community Services).

CHAIR: Leeanne Ryan, Acting General Manager

APOLOGIES: Cllr Peter Shinton, Cllr Denis Todd, Noel Willoughby.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

A/General Manager, Leeanne Ryan, provided an overview of the purpose of the meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Community Consultation Meeting held in Coonabarabran on Tuesday, 29 November 2016, were discussed.

BUSINESS ARISING

Nil.

COUNCIL PROJECT UPDATES

Australia Day Awards

A/Director Corporate and Community Services, Michael Jones, provided an overview of plans for Australia Day 2018.

Council was asked by a local resident if they would consider changing the date on which Australia Day is celebrated.

Community Financial Assistance Donations

A/Director Corporate and Community Services, Michael Jones, provided an overview of Council's Financial Assistance Donations and encouraged people to apply in the next round.

Budget Submissions

A/Director Corporate and Community Services, Michael Jones, reminded attendees of the opportunity to have input in to Council's budget planning process.

Regional Economic Development Plans

A/Director Development Services, Aileen Bell, provided information regarding the development of Regional Economic Development Plans and encouraged people to take part in upcoming consultations.

COMMUNITY MATTERS OF INTEREST / CONCERN

National Broadband Network (NBN)

Council was asked if they had had any dealings with other telecommunication providers. Council indicated that they were looking at alternatives to the NBN given limited access in Coonabarabran and that Council's senior staff were to be addressed by representatives from a telecommunications company.

Art and Creativity

A resident spoke about the importance of arts and culture to local communities and asked if Council would commit to an arts and culture strategy. A representative of Council indicated that Council does have a Public Art Policy. It was felt by the community that this had not been well promoted. The representative of Council went on the outline their plans to put a proposal in to budget process to establish a 355 Committee for the whole Shire. Another representative of Council spoke about plans by the Councillors to establish an arts and cultural centre in Coonabarabran. Members of the community indicated they felt that they should be consulted in relation to this. Members of the community were encouraged to get involved in local arts groups. It was asked that a submission be made to Council to progress work in this area.

Coonabarabran Swimming Pool Complex

A representative of the community made a presentation to the meeting regarding the Coonabarabran swimming pool complex. It was indicated that many members of the community were in attendance at the meeting to support the call for improvements to the pool. A number of issues were raised in relation to the pool including safety issues, supervision of children and young people, inability to complete swimming lessons properly, fear of the drop off, difficulty in removing injured people from the pool, limited engagement in therapy and other sessions, issues for people with mobility issues, enabling access for more people and limited attractiveness to visitors and tourists. A number of potential solutions were raised and discussed. Council advised that the Coonabarabran swimming pool complex is on Council's wish list for infrastructure projects, however significant funding is needed. To apply for this funding, projects needs to be shovel ready and have detailed plans in place. Representatives of the community requested that Council establish an Advisory Committee – as per the Coonabarabran Sporting Complex Advisory Committee. This was agreed to by Council. It was requested that a submission be made to Council to progress work in this area.

Disability Services and Access

A resident addressed the meeting regarding their concerns about Coonabarabran not being accessible and inclusive and suggested some ideas to make it more accessible and inclusive. Others spoke about how they found Coonabarabran to be an inclusive community, although there are some obvious physical accessibility issues. Council said they are working on bringing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to life and will be seeking support from members of the community to do this. Representatives from Breakthru offered to meet with Council staff to take them around town and highlight some of the accessibility issues experienced by people with a disability and their carers.

Encouragement of New Business

Concerns were raised regarding lack of proper process when Council is dealing with businesses. A member of the local business community provided some examples of interactions with Council. Council were asked to be more encouraging to new businesses. Council were also asked to be more transparent, including in regards to timeframes, and to set a service standard. Council committed to a review of this area.

Council Timeframes – Enquiries, Requests and Complaints

Concerns were raised regarding a perceived lack of systems in place for dealing with enquiries, requests and complaints. Council advised that they have in place a Customer Service Charter and a system for managing enquiries, requests and complaints. It was acknowledged that this Charter, and the system, may need to be reviewed, in particular in terms of its implementation. It was also suggested that perhaps the services standard needs to be communicated to the community.

Council – Councillors and Senior Management

Questions were asked regarding how Council works in terms of Councillors and Senior Management. Council advised that Councillors set the strategic direction and the General Manager operationalises this direction. The General Manager can also provide advice to Council if required. It was also asked how Councillors can make complaints. Council advised that if Councillors have complaints from the community, they can raise these with the General Manager and the Directors. Council advised that there is a Code of Conduct in place for both Councillors and Council staff.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Footpath Cassilis Street – John Street and Charles Street

A question was asked about when the footpath in Cassilis Street, between John Street and Charles Street, will be fixed. Council indicated that these works are in the plan and there is a budget for this work but others works are currently being completed.

Bypass

A question was asked about progress in relation to the bypass. Concerns were raised about ongoing near misses in town with trucks. Council advised that recent advice from the Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) is that they have a program planned to investigate the environmental impacts of a bypass. It is understood that information will come out in first half of 2018.

Cycle Way and Walking Path

Plans for a cycle way and walking path from the town to Warrumbungle National Park were raised. A local group – made up of representatives from local community groups – is working on securing funding for this project, potentially through regional tourism funding. The group has already applied for a small grant to do a business case to assist with future funding applications.

Toilet Facilities – Cemetery

Representatives from the Coonabarabran DPS, Local & Family History Group, expressed their concerns about the lack of toilet facilities at the cemetery. They requested Council investigate potential facilities such as those at Nandi Park.

John Oxley Rest Area

Residents raised that it is almost 200 years since John Oxley passed through our area. Residents requested that a sign be placed at the site where there was going to be a rest area established to acknowledge this. Council advised that they would speak further with the Coonabarabran DPS, Local & Family History Group, regarding a sign and also any celebrations to take place next year.

Encouraging Local Business

Council were asked, by representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, to be more proactive in encouraging and supporting local businesses. Council suggested that representatives from Council's Development Services Team attend a Chamber of Commerce Meeting. It was requested that the Chamber of Commerce send an invitation to Council to facilitate this.

Rate Notice

Concerns were raised regarding a rate notice sent out without pensioner discount and subsequent issues with this. Council committed to looking in to this issue.

Dental Surgeries

Council was asked to about their position on the Dental Bus that visited a local school recently., given that Coonabarabran is serviced by two (2) dental surgeries. Council advised that they had spoken with both dental surgeries regarding this and had advised NSW Health that we didn't require this service as we would prefer to support our local services. Council confirmed that no permit had been granted to park this bus in town.

Fluoride – Town Water Supply

A question was asked regarding why there is no fluoride in the town water supply. Council advised that the Shire has five (5) water supplies with fluoride set up. There are currently some issue in relation to this. There is no timeline for when this will be fixed. Funding is required to fix the set up. Council are working with NSW Health on this. Council confirmed that the town water supply has had fluoride in the past and will have it in the future.

Economic Development and Tourism Meetings

A question was asked regarding the attendance of Community Development Coordinators at the Economic Development and Tourism Meetings. This meeting was taken on notice by Council with the matter to be investigated further.

MEETING CLOSED: 7:40pm