

evocities
REGIONAL CITY LIVING

TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 that a **Meeting of Tamworth Regional Council** will be held in the **Council Chambers, Lands Building, Nemingha Room, 25-27 Fitzroy Street, Tamworth**, commencing at **6.30pm**.

ORDINARY COUNCIL AGENDA

11 FEBRUARY 2025

PAUL BENNETT
GENERAL MANAGER

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Council

Meeting Date: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month commencing at 6:30pm.

Matters determined by Ordinary meetings will include all those non-delegable functions identified in Section 377 of the Local Government Act as follows:

- *“the appointment of a general manager*
- *the making of a rate*
- *a determination under section 549 as to the levying of a rate*
- *the making of a charge*
- *the fixing of a fee*
- *the borrowing of money*
- *the voting of money for expenditure on its works, services or operations*
- *the compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property (but not including the sale of items of plant or equipment)*
- *the acceptance of tenders which are required under this Act to be invited by the council*
- *the adoption of an operational plan under section 405*
- *the adoption of a financial statement included in an annual financial report*
- *a decision to classify or reclassify public land under Division 1 of Part 2 of Chapter 6*
- *the fixing of an amount or rate for the carrying out by the council of work on private land*
- *the decision to carry out work on private land for an amount that is less than the amount or rate fixed by the council for the carrying out of any such work*
- *the review of a determination made by the council, and not by a delegate of the council, of an application for approval or an application that may be reviewed under section 82A of the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#)*
- *the power of the council to authorise the use of reasonable force for the purpose of gaining entry to premises under section 194*
- *a decision under section 356 to contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons*
- *the making of an application, or the giving of a notice, to the Governor or Minister*
- *this power of delegation*
- *any function under this or any other Act that is expressly required to be exercised by resolution of the council.”*

Other matters and functions determined by Ordinary Council Meetings will include:

- *Notices of Motion*
- *Notices of Motion of Rescission*
- *Council Elections, Polls, Constitutional Referendums and Public Hearings/Inquiries*
- *Ministerial Committees and Inquiries*
- *Mayor and Councillors Annual Fees*
- *Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Mayor and Councillors*
- *Local Government Remuneration Tribunal*
- *Local Government Boundaries*
- *NSW Ombudsman*
- *Administrative Decisions Tribunal*
- *Delegation of Functions by the Minister*
- *Delegation of Functions to General Manager and Principal Committees*
- *Organisation Structure*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Code of Meeting Practice*
- *Honesty and Disclosure of Interests*
- *Access to Information*
- *Protection of Privacy*
- *Enforcement Functions (statutory breaches/prosecutions/recovery of rates)*
- *Dispute Resolution*
- *Council Land and Property Development*
- *Annual Financial Reports, Auditors Reports, Annual Reports and Statement of the Environment Reports*
- *Performance of the General Manager*
- *Equal Employment Opportunity*
- *Powers of Entry*
- *Liability and Insurance*
- *Membership of Organisations*

Membership: All Councillors

Quorum: Five members

Chairperson: The Mayor

Deputy Chairperson: The Deputy Mayor

Community Consultation Policy

The first 30 minutes of Open Council Meetings is available for members of the Public to address the Council Meeting or submit questions either verbally or in writing, on matters INCLUDED in the Business Paper for the Meeting.

Members of the public will be permitted a maximum of three minutes to address the Council Meeting. An extension of time may be granted if deemed necessary.

Members of the public seeking to represent or speak on behalf of a third party must satisfy the Council or Committee Meeting that he or she has the authority to represent or speak on behalf of the third party.

Members of the public wishing to address Council Meetings are requested to contact Council either by telephone, in person or online prior to 4:30pm the day prior to the Meeting to address the Council Meeting. Persons not registered to speak will not be able to address Council at the Meeting.

Council will only permit three speakers in support and three speakers in opposition to a recommendation contained in the Business Paper. If there are more than three speakers, Council's Governance division will contact all registered speakers to determine who will address Council. In relation to a Development Application, the applicant will be reserved a position to speak.

Members of the public will not be permitted to raise matters or provide information which involves:

- personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors);
- personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
- information that would, if disclosed confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business;
- Commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council; or
 - reveal a trade secret;
- information that would, if disclosed prejudice the maintenance of law;
- matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property;
- advice concerning litigation or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege;
- information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land;
- alleged contraventions of any Code of Conduct requirements applicable under Section 440; or
- on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Members of the public will not be permitted to use Community Consultation to abuse, vilify, insult, threaten, intimidate or harass Councillors, Council staff or other members of the public. Conduct of this nature will be deemed to be an act of disorder and the person engaging in such behaviour will be ruled out of the order and may be expelled.

Disclosure of Political Donations or Gifts

If you have made a relevant planning application to Council which is listed for determination on the Council Business Paper you must disclose any political donation or gift made to any councillor or employee of the Council within the period commencing two years before the application is made and ending when the application is determined (Section 147(4) Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979).

If you have made a relevant public submission to Council in relation to a relevant planning application which is listed for determination on the Council Business Paper you must disclose any political donation or gifts made to any councillor or employee of the Council by you as the person making the submission or any associate within the period commencing two years before the submission is made and ending when the application is determined (Section 147(5) Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979).

AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
- 2 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**
- 3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday, 17 December 2024, copies of which were circulated be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the Meeting.

- 4 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Pecuniary Interest

Non Pecuniary Conflict of Interest

Political Donations

- 5 MAYORAL MINUTE**

Nil

- 6 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil

OPEN COUNCIL REPORTS

- 7 ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**

- 7.1 MINIMUM LOT SIZE FOR DUAL OCCUPANCIES IN THE R2 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE**

DIRECTORATE: LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES
AUTHOR: Christopher Faley, Senior Strategic Planner
Mitchell Gillogly, Team Leader – Strategic Planning

2 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Minimum Lot Size for Dual Occupancies in the R2 Low Density Residential Zone”, Council advise the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure of its nomination of a minimum lot size of 2,000m² for dual occupancies on land zoned R2 Low Density Residential under the Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010.

SUMMARY

On 1 July 2024, the NSW Government amended the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* to make dual occupancies and semi-detached dwellings permissible with consent in all R2 Low Density Residential zones across NSW (except for lands affected by certain hazards such as bush fire).

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) has invited Council to nominate a minimum lot size for dual occupancies on land zoned R2 Low Density Residential under the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010 (TRLEP 2010)*. DPHI proposes to insert the minimum lot size provision (if nominated) into the *TRLEP 2010* via a self-repealing State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) which removes the requirement for Council to prepare a Planning Proposal to insert the new provision into the *TRLEP 2010*.

Should Council not nominate a minimum lot size, the DPHI has advised that its default provisions will automatically apply. This means that dual occupancy development will be permissible on all R2 Low Density Residential zoned land regardless of the lot size or the prevailing low density character of the zone.

It is recommended that Council make a submission to the DPHI nominating a minimum lot size of 2,000m² for dual occupancies in the R2 Low Density Residential zone under the *TRLEP 2010*. This does not change Lot Size provisions for the creation of lots, rather, it means that an allotment must have an area of at least 2,000m² to be able to apply for a dual occupancy development in the R2 zone.

COMMENTARY

Background

Between 15 December 2023 and 23 February 2024, the State Government's draft *Stage 1 Low and Mid-Rise housing reforms* were exhibited. These reforms are intended to increase housing diversity in response to the NSW housing crisis. Amongst other matters, these reforms included a proposal to mandate dual occupancies as permissible with consent in all R2 Low Density Residential zones across NSW.

The majority of R2 Low Density Residential zoned land under the *TRLEP 2010* is located in Moore Creek (Hills Plain). Other smaller areas of R2 Low Density Residential zoned land are located at Calala, Westdale, Hillvue (Arcadia) and Oxley Vale (Stratheden). By nature and character, these areas are low density, therefore, Council made a submission to DPHI outlining its concerns with the "one-size-fits all" reforms, which bypasses all local considerations such as neighbourhood character and infrastructure requirements. Council's submission to DPHI is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**.

Subsequently, on 1 July 2024, DPHI implemented *Stage 1 of the Low and Mid-Rise housing reforms* by amending *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* to make dual occupancies and semi-detached dwellings permitted with consent in all R2 Low Density Residential zones (except for some lands affected by certain hazards such as bush fire) across NSW.

On 25 September 2024, correspondence was received from DPHI, advising that Council could nominate a minimum lot size for dual occupancies on R2 Low Density Residential zoned land under the *TRLEP 2010*.

However, if Council does not nominate a minimum lot size, the outcome is that DPHI's default provisions will permit dual occupancy development on all R2 Low Density Residential zoned land regardless of the prevailing low density character of the zone. This would apply to Development Applications and Complying Development Certificates for dual occupancies on all R2 Low Density Residential zoned land.

The correspondence is **ATTACHED** refer **ANNEXURE 2**,

Should Council nominate a minimum lot size, DPHI proposes to insert the minimum lot size provision into the *TRLEP 2010* via a self-repealing SEPP which removes the requirement for Council to prepare a Planning Proposal.

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

The *Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024 (TRHS 2024)* identifies the need for an additional 191 to 356 new dwellings to be constructed each year to 2041. It is acknowledged that the reforms undertaken by DPHI will assist in achieving these housing targets and aligns with the broader vision of 'Priority 2: Increasing diversity and choice in housing' of the *TRHS 2024*.

However, it is important to note that the *TRHS 2024* is not just focused on housing targets. It also contains Priorities and Actions relating to infrastructure and liveability, recognising that these are just as important in ensuring that Tamworth is a sustainable and vibrant place to live.

In relation to the DPHI reforms and the correspondence received on 25 September 2024, although imposing a minimum lot size on dual occupancies may limit potential housing yield, it reduces potential infrastructure impacts (particularly in relation to sewer provision) and supports neighbourhood character. Therefore, imposing a minimum lot size on dual occupancies in the R2 Low Density Residential zone represents a balanced approach to housing supply in accordance with the *TRHS 2024*.

Proposed Minimum Lot Size for Dual Occupancies in the R2 Low Density Residential Zone

The NSW Government expects that should a minimum lot size be applied to dual occupancies, that at least fifty percent (50%) of all lots zoned R2 Low Density Residential will be viable for a dual occupancy development.

When considering the minimum lot size for dual occupancies, it is considered reasonable to align this with the minimum lot size for subdivision for consistency. Under the *TRLEP 2010*, the following minimum lot sizes apply to the R2 Low Density Residential zone:

Minimum Lot Size	Locality	Percentage of R2 zoned land (approx.)
800m ²	Hillview (Arcadia)	2%
1000m ²	Moore Creek (Hills Plain)	8%
2000m ²	Moore Creek (Hills Plain) and Calala	43%
4000m ²	Moore Creek (Hills Plain), Westdale and Oxley Vale (Stratheden)	37%

1 hectare	Moore Creek (Hills Plain)	5%
5 hectares	Moore Creek (Hills Plain)	6%

Of the above minimum lot sizes, less than 50 percent of the R2 Low Density Residential zone has a minimum lot size of 4000m² or greater. Therefore, it is unlikely that the NSW Government would support a minimum lot size for dual occupancy of 4000m², 1 hectare or 5 hectares.

Conversely, establishing a minimum lot size of 800m² or 1000m² would permit dual occupancies across the entirety of the R2 Low Density Residential zone and therefore defeat the purpose of nominating a minimum lot size.

It is considered that 2000m² is the most appropriate minimum lot size for dual occupancies as:

- it would achieve the fifty percent (50%) mandate from the NSW Government by enabling dual occupancy development on ninety one percent (91%) of R2 Low Density Residential zoned land;
- on a 2000m² lot, this equates to a density of 1 dwelling per 1000m². This density is consistent with the “low density” character of the zone as evidenced by the use of 800-1000m² subdivision lot sizes in this zone; and
- although lots less than 2000m² would be excluded from dual occupancies, small-scale diverse housing is still achievable through “secondary dwelling” provisions.

Conclusion

The NSW Government has mandated “dual occupancies” as permissible development in R2 Low Density Residential zones across NSW.

To reduce the potential impacts associated with this “one-size-fits-all” approach, it is recommended that Council apply a minimum lot size of 2000m² for dual occupancies on land zoned R2 Low Density Residential under the *TRLEP 2010*.

(a) Policy Implications

The reform aligns with the broader vision of ‘Priority 2: Increasing diversity and choice in housing’ of the *TRHS 2024*. The reform will require an amendment to the Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010 to include development controls for dual occupancy development on land zoned R2 Low Density Residential under the *TRLEP 2010*.

(b) Financial Implications

Nil

(c) Legal Implications

The nomination of a minimum lot size of 2,000m² for dual occupancies in the R2 Low Density Residential zone will result in an amendment to Council’s statutory planning instrument, the *TRLEP 2010*, and will affect the legal use of land in certain areas.

(d) Community Consultation

The *Stage 1 Low and Mid-Rise Housing reforms* were exhibited from 15 December 2023 to 23 February 2024, by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

The *Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024* underwent extensive consultation with stakeholders, industry bodies and the community throughout 2023 and 2024 leading up to its adoption by Council on 23 July 2024.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 2 – A Liveable Built Environment

Focus Area 9 – Open and Collaborative Leadership

8 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

8.1 TAMWORTH CITY BMX CLUB REQUEST FOR A GIFTED ZERO TURN MOWER

DIRECTORATE: REGIONAL SERVICES

AUTHOR: Paul Kelly, Manager - Sports and Recreation

Richard Willis, Sport and Recreation Development Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Tamworth City BMX Club Request for a Gifted Zero Turn Mower”, Council allocate the Club with a suitable zero turn mower on the basis that the Club will be responsible for the garaging, security, and all ongoing maintenance and running costs, while this item of Council plant is allocated to this community group.

SUMMARY

Tamworth Regional Council has received a request from the Tamworth City BMX Club (the Club), requesting Council provide a zero-turn mower for maintenance of the BMX Complex at Marius Street, North Tamworth. By allocating a zero-turn mower, Council will assist the Club to maintain the BMX Complex to a high standard for all visitors and club members.

COMMENTARY

The Club recently commenced a lease of the BMX complex. The Club is supported by a committed group of volunteers who will, as part of the lease agreement, undertake all maintenance of the site and permit, and encourage, it to be used as an active recreation facility for their members and the community.

Recently, the Club has written to Council to seek the allocation of a community mower so that they can improve the maintenance of their grounds.

The request is for a zero-turn mower with a large cutting width of around 1.5m. Council uses similar machines, with a number coming up for renewal each year. The approximate written down value of a such a mower is \$6,000 exclusive of GST.

Given the proactive attitude shown by the Club to date in managing a unique Council asset, with significant NSW events being held at the Tamworth BMX complex in 2024, it would be a positive gesture to assist the Club volunteers with their request.

Therefore, it is recommended that Council support this request with a suitable mower when one becomes available.

If supported, the Club would then assume responsibility for garaging, security, and normal maintenance/running costs whilst the mower is allocated to them. All of the annual maintenance of the machine would be transferred to the Club and the requirements for safe operation and maintenance remain with Club.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Council's Plant Reserve will be impacted by approximately \$6,000, however, this is not expected to adversely affect the plant replacement program.

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

(d) Community Consultation

Nil

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 2 – A liveable built environment

8.2 TAMWORTH REGIONAL PARKING STRATEGY

DIRECTORATE: REGIONAL SERVICES
AUTHOR: Graeme McKenzie, Manager - Strategy, Assets and Design
Nicholas Smith, Senior Transport Engineer

1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Tamworth Regional Parking Strategy”, Council adopt the Strategy.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request that Council adopt the Tamworth Regional Parking Strategy (the Parking Strategy). The Parking Strategy has been developed through adopting Austroads “Best Parking Practices” and through extensive community and stakeholder consultation. The Parking Strategy is an update to the 2020 Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy and aims to ensure that Council manages its parking network in an equitable and efficient manner, whilst also ensuring we are planning for the future with regards to infrastructure, revenue and technology.

The main benefits that the community will see from the implementation of the Parking Strategy are:

- improved turnover of on-street parking spaces in the Tamworth central business district (CBD) – particularly on Peel Street, which in turn will support local businesses (endorsed by the Tamworth Business Chamber);

- close to 200 additional free parking spaces in the Tamworth CBD – meaning motorists can park in more places for free;
- improved user experience in the Tamworth CBD by adopting industry best parking practices (improved turnover, reduced congestion, increased likelihood of finding a vacant parking space) and implementing better enforcement techniques (Licence Plate Recognition Cameras);
- improved efficiency and reliability of our parking meters by replacing them with new, modern machines; and
- ensuring that we are “future-ready” and have a stable funding source to deliver new parking infrastructure (multi-storey car park in the Tamworth CBD) and maintain and renew our existing parking network.

COMMENTARY

The Parking Strategy is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**, and outlines how Tamworth Regional Council will ensure that Tamworth and the surrounding towns/villages have a functional, equitable and financially sustainable parking network.

The Parking Strategy sits within Council’s suite of transport-related strategic documents, which includes the Integrated Transport Plan (Council’s guiding transport strategy), the Active Transport Strategy and the Bridge and Major Culvert Strategy. It aligns with industry best-practice and other key documents such as Council’s Blueprint 100 document.

Good parking management requires a balance between the needs of users and the cost of providing this infrastructure to the community. Recognising that different areas can have significantly different parking requirements/demands is critical in providing the most suitable parking arrangements for a given location.

Likewise, poor parking management can exacerbate traffic congestion, lower economic activity, reduce amenity and detract users from an area. For locals, this can cause ongoing frustration, and may also reduce visitation and tourism opportunities.

The primary objectives of the Parking Strategy are to:

- reduce congestion associated with parking;
- improve the overall user experience (including accessibility);
- align our parking network with industry best parking practices;
- improve the safety and efficiency with which we carry out enforcement;
- be “future ready” in terms of technology, funding and planning;
- expand our focus to include other key parking areas such as our towns/villages and other critical precincts (sports and entertainment);
- make what parking infrastructure we already have, function more efficiently and more safely; and
- improve the quality, location and number of disabled parking spaces.

There are a number of challenges and key drivers that underpin the Parking Strategy, including:

- growing and ageing population – Not only is our population growing, but it is also ageing, with the number of persons aged over 70 years living within the Tamworth Local Government area (LGA) increasing by around 250 people annually (via Census data);
- increase in vehicles – With a growing population and limited public and active transport services/infrastructure, there is an increasing reliance on private vehicles for journeys within the Tamworth LGA. Census data shows the number of vehicles in the Tamworth LGA has increased from 43,600 in 2011 to 52,500 in 2021;
- increasing average vehicle size;
- managing congestion and urban amenity in the CBD;
- technology improvements; and
- future traffic generating developments and events.

The Parking Strategy also adopts the principles for best practice for parking in accordance with the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management. These include:

- long stay parking to be provided off-street and minimised on-street;
- short stay parking to be provided on-street;
- a premium is to be paid for short stay on-street parking compared to off-street parking;
- people with disability parking permits need to park as close to their destination as possible; and
- paid parking discourages long-stay users parking in short-stay areas, and should be implemented where poor turnover and/or high occupancy exists.

The Parking Strategy has been developed to address the key drivers identified above and the shift toward best practice for parking.

A summary of the major changes outlined within the Parking Strategy are:

- implement ticketless card-only parking meters;
- remove all off-street metered parking spaces;
- introduce paid parking to Peel Street (White Street to Bourke Street);
- continue use of Licence Plate Recognition Cameras for vehicle enforcement; and
- implement time restricted parking for extended weekend hours in Peel Street.

Implementing the above changes are expected to make parking more equitable, assist with turnover, improve the user experience and benefit businesses. Overall, the above changes will result in around 200 less metered parking spaces in the Tamworth CBD.

A public exhibition period for the Parking Strategy was held from 1 October 2024 to 1 November 2024. Feedback received was generally negative towards the implementation of paid parking in Peel Street, however, many acknowledged that available parking is currently difficult to find and congestion is high in the Tamworth CBD. Following this, a Councillor workshop was held in December 2024.

Adoption of the Parking Strategy is expected to establish a path that will allow achievement of the purpose and objectives of the Strategy. As noted within the action plan within the

document, it is proposed that the Parking Strategy would be further updated in 2029, to be responsive to parking requirements across Tamworth Regional Council.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Nil currently, however, identified projects will require funding as they are developed. It is expected that the Carparking Reserve will fund the vast majority of identified car parking works, including the ongoing maintenance of our car park network.

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

(d) Community Consultation

Various meetings have been held with key stakeholders (internal and external).

A public survey ran from August 2023 to September 2023, with the general comment themes being:

- parking meters never seem to work;
- not enough disabled parking spots and existing ones are difficult to use;
- not enough all-day car parks;
- more long vehicle car parks should be provided; and
- perception that enforcement is not working well.

The update to the Parking Strategy also leaned on themes from the previously adopted Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy (which also underwent thorough community consultation). A period of public exhibition of the draft Parking Strategy ran from 1 October 2024 to 1 November 2024, with the key results being:

- 915 visitors to the webpage;
- 90 unique contributors of feedback;
- 30 document downloads of the Parking Strategy;
- strong opposition to proposed paid parking in Peel Street;
- congestion is currently really bad in the CBD and particularly Peel Street;
- the existing parking meters are difficult to use and are continually out of order;
- a multi-storey car park is required in the CBD;
- there are not enough disabled parking spaces;
- the proposal of paid parking in Peel Street will cause businesses to suffer;
- concerns that less tech-savvy drivers will not be able to use ticketless parking meters; and
- concerns that the Licence Plate Recognition Cameras will give fines to those with disabled parking permits.

As part of the public exhibition period, the Tamworth Business Chamber were informed as to the intent of the Parking Strategy. Overall, the Tamworth Business Chamber are supportive of the Parking Strategy and the adoption of best parking practices, including measures to minimise long-stay parking in premium retail areas – noting that higher turnover actually supports local businesses.

The Tamworth Business Chamber did express concerns about the number of individuals who feel unsafe utilising many off-street car parks in the CBD and on the fringes of the CBD, particularly during low-light hours.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 5 – Connect our Region and its Citizens

8.3 AUTOMATED WATER METER PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

DIRECTORATE: WATER AND WASTE

AUTHOR: Daniel Coe, Manager - Water and Environmental Operations

Reference: Item 12.6 to Ordinary Council 26 April 2022 - Minute No 123/22
1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Automated Water Meter Project Implementation”, Council:

- (i) receive and note the report;*
- (ii) advertise Council’s intent to remove the ‘Reduction in Water Consumption Charges’ Policy by placing on public display for a period of not less than 28 days seeking comments on the proposed Policy removal;*
- (iii) in the event that no submissions are received regarding the proposed removal of Council’s ‘Reduction in Water Consumption Charges’ Policy, proceed with removing the Policy;*
- (iv) if any submissions are received regarding the proposed removal of Council’s ‘Reduction in Water Consumption Charges’ Policy, request the Director Water and Waste prepare a further report to Council with details of the submissions for Council’s further consideration; and*
- (v) request the Director Water and Waste review and if appropriate prepare a draft Policy and associated fees and charges for automated water metering of community title developments for Council’s consideration.*

SUMMARY

This purpose of this report is to provide Council details of the Automated Water Meter Project implementation that commenced in 2023. The rollout of in excess of 23,000 water meters across all of Council’s six water supplies was completed in late 2024, with the project moving into the operational phase of water meter operation.

The report also discusses the proposed communication strategy to maximise use of the developed customer water usage monitoring portal and implications to existing Council Policies with the phase in of automated water metering.

COMMENTARY

Automated Water Meter Tender Process

At its Meeting of 26 April 2022, Council considered a report regarding the tender evaluation completed for Tender T094/2022 – Automated Metering Infrastructure and Data Management to Tamworth Regional Council Water Supply Areas. The tendered project involved the replacement of all of Council's 23,000 manually read water meters with automated water meters (AMR). The tendered Scope of Works included:

- a) concept and detailed design of the AMR system for all of Council's water supplies – Attunga, Barraba, Bendemeer, Manilla, Nundle and Tamworth (including Moonbi/Kootingal);
- b) assess and identify any water meter replacement program required to facilitate accurate automated meter reading processes;
- c) establish a reliable communication process/network to facilitate accurate and reliable meter data capture for all town, village and satellite areas including obtaining any communications licencing required for any planned Council owned infrastructure;
- d) provide data management services in receiving, collating and interfacing data with Council's business and billing system (Technology One); and
- e) provide support and maintenance for the system hardware and software for the design life of the system i.e. operational phase of the contract expected to be 15 years.

Prior to tendering the AMR project, a business case was prepared and presented to Council. The developed business case identified the following potential benefits for Council in implementing an AMR system:

Financial

- personnel assigned to water meter reading could be diverted to other tasks including maintenance and management of the AMR system;
- tighter control over the billing cycle (all meters can be read on the same day);
- ability to reduce the billing cycle (could change from three monthly to one monthly or pre-paid), may provide options for Council to improve the revenue stream;
- data from metering can be utilised in the strategic delivery of large cost infrastructure i.e. additional water usage information can be utilised to ensure water infrastructure is delivered as required;
- special reads for change of ownership or tenancy can be done on demand without personnel having to attend site; and
- automatic interface and transfer of meter reading data to the Council billing system removes the requirement for manual data entry into the billing system.

Water Loss

- AMR system would allow for early network and customer leak and water loss detection. This can provide a saving that may offset the ongoing costs of maintaining the AMR system, in some circumstances.

Maintenance

- safety is improved as manual reads of meters are no longer required and the associated driving/walking hazards are removed in fully automated systems (as opposed to those where the data is collected by walking or driving past the meter);
- AMR devices have the ability to provide near real-time advice for failing meters allowing Council to improve responsiveness to users, particularly large water consumers. The added benefits include the ability to plan replacements limiting any negative impacts to critical customers;
- the data management software can provide monitoring of the meters, sensors and network providing early feedback of faults and issues to the maintenance team. Reports for the maintenance team can be generated automatically and data can be transferred to a maintenance system if used; and
- meter fleet performance can be monitored, allowing replacement programs based on performance rather than a fixed kilolitre throughput.

On consideration of the report, Council resolved to proceed with the installation of automated water metering, for all six water supplies, and engaged contractor Taggle to undertake the project.

Project Implementation

Following engagement of Taggle, AMR system design and meter procurement commenced in 2022, with meter installation commencing in April 2023. The majority of meters were installed by early 2024, and the developed customer water portal 'My TRCwater' was made available for customers use in late 2023.

Delivery of the project included:

- replacement or upgrade of in excess of 23,000 water meters;
- construction of a metering system data network i.e. receival and transmission of meter data;
- development of a meter monitoring and reading system – Taggle product 'Aqualus';
- integration of Aqualus with Council's existing property and rating/billing software – Technology One;
- development and implement a customer water usage monitoring portal – 'My TRCwater'; and
- ongoing operational phase – up to 14 years i.e. expected to cover the operational life of the new automated water meters.

The initial project budget estimate was \$6.5M with the final project costs being approximately \$6.8M.

The additional project costs were primarily associated with undertaking water service replacements and upgrades required to install/fit new meters. In addition, higher specification meters were installed for Council's largest water users.

Customer Water Portal Ongoing Community Consultation

With the completion of the AMR implementation, it is planned to commence an intensive community engagement program to maximise use of the developed My TRCwater customer portal. To date, approximately 1,700 customers have registered within the portal.

To increase the usage of the portal it is proposed to undertake an intensive community engagement program for three months commencing in March 2025. This engagement program would include:

- print media advertising;
- radio advertising, staff interviews;
- social media;
- TV and cinema advertising;
- bus shelter poster advertising; and
- promotion of positive customer experiences i.e. customers that have been made aware of leaks etc.

Planned ongoing community engagement will include the following:

- promotion of the MyTRCwater portal through Council sustainability events;
- update of water meter project page to represent ongoing meter system operation. For example, new videos are to be created for 'how to read your water meter', 'how to investigate your property for a water leak', 'how to utilise the MyTRC Water Portal'; and
- direct communications with customers regarding potential water leaks on their property. Alignment with this correspondence to any potential rebates offered by Council for example evaporative cooler maintenance.

Policy Implications

In 2014, Council introduced a 'Reduction in Water Consumption Charges' Policy'. The Policy aimed to ensure a consistent approach when considering water billing adjustments for customers due to internal property leaks or unexplained water increases for a property.

The Policy is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**. Key aspects of the Policy are summarised below:

- the Policy allows water bill reductions for properties that have an unexplained water increase or internal leak repaired. The Policy requires the following to be met:
 - property uses less than four kilolitres of water per day;
 - there has been at least three years of water consumption at the property;
 - evidence of a leak is provided or property owner provides evidence of internal leak investigation;
 - property owner must claim within 90 days of being issued a water bill; and
 - the Policy limits adjustments to once every five years per property regardless of ownership.

If the criteria detailed above are met then Council may reduce the water consumption charges for the disputed period as follows:

- the charge levied would be withdrawn and replaced with the average annual daily consumption for similar periods in the preceding three years (regardless of ownership of the property), multiplied by the number of days during the period in question, multiplied by the appropriate charge.

Because Council applies a three-tier water charging system, when a significant increase in consumption occurs it may push consumption charges, within the disputed period and for subsequent periods, in the same financial year into a higher tier. If the claim for a reduction in water charges is approved, then subsequent charges may also have to be amended based on the reduced consumption in the disputed period.

Current issues with the Policy include:

- administration is time consuming to review, calculate charges, adjust bills etc;
- the majority of adjustments tend to be summer or peak water usage periods indicating that adjustments may be occurring for actual water used by customers;
- does not encourage residents to be responsible for their water use – noting previous manual reading system did not allow customers early warning of potential leaks or high-water use; and
- lost revenue based on water bill adjustments is significant. On average adjustments are in the order of \$100,000 per year.

On commencement of the automated water meter project, Council was advised that a benefit of the project would be that customers would be alerted to potential water leaks at their property and/or high-water daily consumption. The developed MyTRCwater customer portal allows customers to access to their property water usage and allow monitoring and associated warnings. Warnings of a potential leak/high consumption can be automatically sent by the portal to the customer via email and mobile SMS. Staff can also communicate to the customer by these means if the customer is registered in the portal.

The portal provides customers alerts for potential water leaks when water continuously flows through a water meter for a period of more than 48 hours i.e. the water flow rate never returns to zero during this time.

The warning/alert within the MyTRCwater portal are initially established by Council and can be adjusted by the customer to suit their particular needs. For residential customers and small commercial customers i.e. using less than four kilolitres of water per day, it is proposed that the default warning/alert levels that customers will receive for notification of potential water leak and associated escalation process will be as follows:

- a warning level message of a potential water leak of up to eight litres per hour will be an automated message created by the MyTRCwater portal system and sent to a customer. This requires the customer to have a MyTRCwater account;
- an alert level message of a potential leak of up to 25 litres per hour will be an automated message created by the MyTRCwater portal system and sent to a customer. This requires the customer to have a MyTRCwater account; and
- for all potential water leaks greater than 25 litres per hour, Council staff will send correspondence, by letter to the property owner advising of a potential water leak within one week.

The MyTRCwater portal also provides a daily high water consumption warning and alert. The default settings will be as follows:

- high daily consumption warning of 2,000 litres per day; and
- high daily consumption alert of 3,000 litres per day.

It should be noted properties/individual water meters can have alert levels tailored to their water use. This is particularly applicable and will be required to be applied to large commercial water users.

To encourage customers to utilise the system, maximise the return on investment made by Council in AMR and to offset the costs of water reductions and associated administration costs, it is recommended that Council remove the 'Reduction in Water Consumption Charges' Policy. Should Council agree with this recommendation, it is proposed to place Council's intent of removing the Policy on public display for a period of 28 days for public feedback. Following this display period, a further report would be presented to Council if any feedback was received. Should Council resolve to remove the Policy, to allow potential existing billing adjustments to be completed i.e. adjustments received within the allowed 90 day period, it would be expected the Policy would be removed as of 1 July 2025.

The rollout of AMR allows the potential opportunity of providing automated water metering services to community title developments i.e. privately owned water assets. The current issue is community title or similar developments are supplied water by a Council owned bulk water meter which is generally located at the boundary of the development. This Council owned water meter is now included within the automated water meter system. To allow the community title development to allocate water usage to individual lots within the development, the developer installs privately owned meters for each lot within the community. The readings obtained from Council's bulk water meter and associated bill are used by the community to apportion costs to individual lots and water used for common areas of the development. With the rollout of automated water metering, a number of community title schemes have requested access to Council's automated water metering system to allow for individual water billing and water use monitoring.

Council's current fees and charges do not accommodate the supply of automated meters and associated individual lot billing. It is recommended that Council request the Director Water and Waste to review policy and associated fees and charging options to allow community title scheme access to the automated water metering system i.e. to maximise the system use and encourage water sustainability within these developments.

(a) Policy Implications

Should Council agree with the recommendations in the report, it is proposed to proceed to community consultation for the removal of Council's 'Reduction in Water Consumption Charges' Policy. The report also recommends Council consider the option of developing a policy for community title development automated water metering.

(b) Financial Implications

As detailed in the report, should Council proceed with removal of the 'Reduction in Water Consumption Charges' Policy, significant financial savings in water bill adjustments and administration costs would be realised.

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

(d) Community Consultation

Community consultation for the ongoing AMR implementation and customer portal usage will be undertaken as per the detail included in the report.

Should Council agree with consideration of removing the 'Reduction in Water Consumption Charges' Policy, the intent to remove the Policy will be advertised and placed on public display for comment.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 1 – Our Water Security.

8.4 RECLASSIFYING CARPARKS IN EV CHARGING ON PUBLIC LAND POLICY

DIRECTORATE: WATER AND WASTE

AUTHOR: Ashleigh Smith, Sustainability Coordinator

Reference: Item 8.4 to Ordinary Council 26 March 2024 - Minute No 52/24
Item 8.3 to Ordinary Council 28 May 2024 - Minute No 110/24

1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report "Reclassifying Carparks in EV Charging on Public Land Policy", Council:

- (i) endorse the change in classification of White Street, Griffin Avenue and the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame carparks to ensure consistency with the previous Council decision;*
- (ii) agree that an upfront fee will be directed to the Carpark Reserve, and the annual fee will be directed to the Energy Sustainability Reserve;*
- (iii) place the amended Electric Vehicle Public Charging on Public Land Policy on public display for a period of not less than 28 days; and*
- (iv) request the Director Water and Waste prepare a further report on this matter if any submissions, objecting to the proposed changes, are received, otherwise adopt the amended policy.*

SUMMARY

At the Council Meeting of 28 May 2024, Council agreed to implement a Policy in relation to converting public carparking spaces to carparking for EV charging, which included an upfront levy and annual fees on companies wishing to temporarily convert public carparks to EV charging stations. The agreed upfront fee for conversion of public carparks in the Tamworth CBD was 50% of the rate detailed in Council's Fees and Charges.

During consideration of this proposal, Council was advised staff had received one proposal to convert public carparks in the White Street carpark and the advice given to Council assumed the White Street carpark was included in the Section 94 plan related to CBD.

After the Council Meeting, it was identified that White Street Carpark is not currently within the S.94 (Direct) Contribution CBD boundary.

Given this information Council is being asked to amend the adopted Policy to clarify which public carparks are considered CBD carparks and which are not.

Direction from Council is also required in relation to where funds raised from the upfront levy and annual charges are allocated, once received.

COMMENTARY

During the Council Meeting on the 26 March 2024, Council was presented with a report to place an EV Strategy and EV Charging on Public Land Policy on public display. The draft documents included a requirement that any proposal to convert existing public carparks to EV charging stations would incur an upfront fee and an annual fee depending on the number of public carparks lost. For the CBD the upfront fee would be 50% of the rate detailed in Council's Fees and Charges, per carpark.

Reflecting this requirement, the current fees for EV charging stations in existing public carparks in the Tamworth CBD are:

- Upfront fee - \$10,489.00 per carpark (24/25 FY); and
- Annual fee - \$2,000.00 per carpark (24/25 FY).

Current fees for EV charging stations outside the Tamworth CBD are:

- Upfront fee - Nil
- Annual fee - \$500.00 per carpark (24/25FY).

Council subsequently adopted the Strategy and Policy, including the upfront charge for CBD carparks at its Meeting of 28 May 2024.

During consideration of this proposal, Council was advised staff had received one proposal to convert public carparks in the White Street carpark. Advice given to Council assumed the White Street carpark was included in the Section 94 plan related to the CBD and therefore any conversion of carparks approved by Council at this location would attract the upfront fees etc. It has since been identified the White Street carpark is not currently within the S.94 (Direct) Contribution CBD boundary.

A review of the boundary for S.94 (Direct) Contribution CBD shows that White Street and Griffin Avenue carparks are outside the boundary line (as Shown in Image 1 & 2). Therefore, a proposal to convert public carparking spaces in either the White Street and/or Griffin Avenue carparks would not attract the upfront fee. Further, the carpark at the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame (HoF) is inside the boundary and therefore any conversion of public carparking spaces in this location (as shown in Image 3) would attract the upfront fee and annual payment.

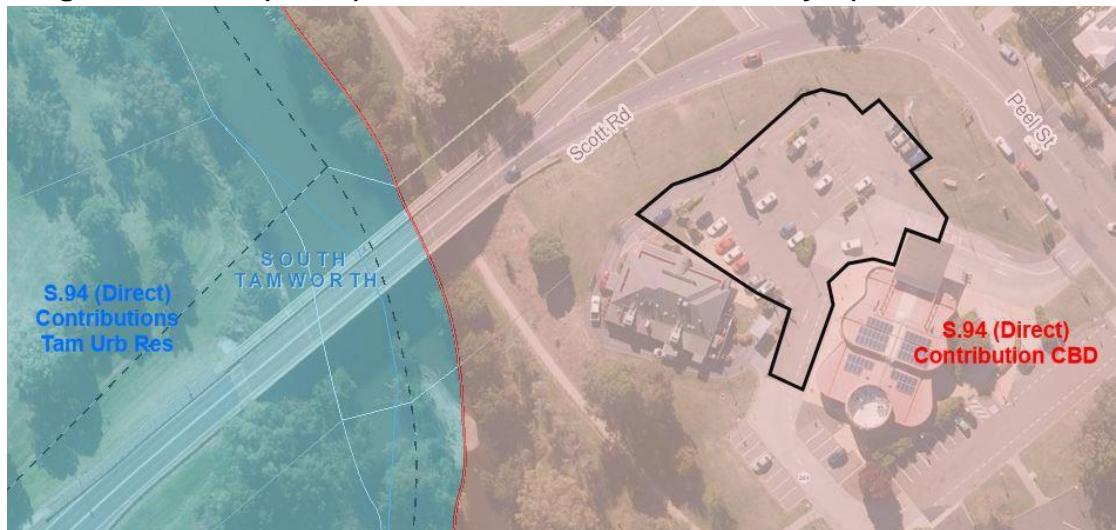
Image 1: S.94 (Direct) Contribution CBD boundary (White Street Carpark)



Image 2: S.94 (Direct) Contribution CBD boundary (Griffin Ave Carpark)



Image 3: S.94 (Direct) Contribution CBD boundary (Hall of Fame Carpark)



During debate on the Strategy and Policy it is considered Councillors had expectations the upfront fees payable for taking out public carparking in the CBD would be substantial and would therefore act as a deterrent. No up-front fees were set for non-CBD carparking, in effort to encourage conversion of non-CBD public carparking spaces in preference to CBD parking spaces.

As the White Street and Griffin Avenue carparks are outside of the CBD boundary, as far as the Tamworth Regional Section 94 (Direct) Contributions Plan 2013 in concerned, Council's intention in placing a substantial upfront fee on the loss of CBD public carpark space cannot be realised.

It is also apparent that the carpark at the Country Music Hall of Fame carpark is within the relevant plan. Given the location of this carpark it is considered inclusion in the CBD area is not warranted.

A number of options to address this matter have been considered as listed below:

1. do nothing;
2. Council adopts a new upfront fee for the CBD carparking spaces, and nominate which carparks are inside and outside of this area, which is not linked to the CBD Section 94 contribution fee;
3. change the CBD contributions plan to include the White Street and Griffin Avenue carparks and remove the Hall of Fame carpark; or
4. leave the CBD contribution plan as is but amend the EV charging on Public Land Policy to include the White Street and Griffin Avenue carparks as part of the CBD contributions area and remove the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame carpark from the CBD contribution area.

Of the options considered, the do noting option does not reflect Council's intentions when adopting the Policy. Option 2 is not supported as Tamworth Regional Section 94 (Direct) Contributions Plan 2013 regarding CBD Car Parking, places a price on the provision of CBD parking and linking the costs associated with removing this parking to allow EV charging spaces should be linked to this same cost. Option 3 changing the relevant Contribution Plan will take time and is not considered warranted when simple changes to the adopted Policy (Option 4) can achieve the same result.

Under the current adopted Policy income generated from the installation of EV charging stations would go into the Carparking Reserve. Council may like to consider a change whereby the upfront fee continues to go into the Carparking Reserve. However, the annual fee would be used to increase funds available in the Energy Sustainability Reserve. Directing funding towards the Energy Sustainability Reserve will help fund works which lead to future benefits for Council and the community through reducing expenditure on electricity and associated carbon emission reduction.

(a) Policy Implications

Should Council agree with the recommendation then the adopted Electric Vehicle Charging on Public Land Policy will have to be amended and placed on public display for public comment before final adoption.

A copy of the amended policy (with amendments shown in red) is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANEXURE 1**.

(b) Financial Implications

Charges levied on applications to convert public parking spaces to EV charging ensures removal of public carparks within or servicing the CBD attracts a significant upfront fee but encourages the use of public carparks on the fringe of the CBD for conversion to EV charging areas.

Upfront Fees paid by providers of EV charging will be placed in the Carparking Reserve to help fund ongoing and future carparking.

Annual fees paid by providers of EV charging will go into the Energy Sustainability Reserve to help fund reductions in energy consumption for various Council assets.

(c) Legal Implications

A lease agreement is required to be executed between proponents and Council for the use of public land as EV charging stations in accordance with the adopted Strategy and Policy.

(d) Community Consultation

Should Council agree to amend the Policy then the amended Electric Vehicle Charging on Public Land Policy will go back on public display for 28 days.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 5 – Connect Our Region and its Citizens.

9 GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCE

9.1 2025 NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER
AUTHOR: Lisa May, Coordinator Governance and Executive Services
1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “2025 National General Assembly of Local Government ”,

Council:

- (i) nominate Councillor representatives to attend this Conference as appropriate; and**
- (ii) determine whether any Motions will be submitted for inclusion on the Conference Agenda**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the 2025 National General Assembly of Local Government Conference to be held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra from 24 - 27 June 2025.

COMMENTARY

Convened annually by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), the National General Assembly (NGA) of Local Government is the peak annual event for Local Government, attracting in excess of 800 Mayors and Councillors each year. The Assembly provides a unique opportunity for Local Government to engage directly with Federal Government, to develop national policy and to influence the future direction of our councils and our communities.

The 2025 NGA will be held at the National Convention Centre in Canberra over 24-27 June 2025 with the theme being *“National Priorities Need Local Solutions”*. While the Assembly is not until June, accommodation is reserved with registration and can book out early, therefore to secure rooms close to the National Convention Centre it is recommended that Councillors nominate to attend as soon as possible.

To assist Council to identify motions that address the theme of the 2025 NGA, the ALGA Secretariat has prepared a short discussion paper, a copy of which is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**. To be eligible for inclusion in the NGA Business Papers, and subsequent debate on the floor of the NGA, motions must meet the following criteria:

- 1) be relevant to the work of local government nationally;
- 2) not be focused on a specific jurisdiction, location or region – unless the project or issue has national implications;
- 3) be consistent with the themes of the NGA;
- 4) complement or build on the policy objectives of ALGA and your state or territory local government association;
- 5) be submitted by a council which is a financial member of their state or territory local government association;
- 6) propose a clear action and outcome i.e. call on the Australian Government to act on something;
- 7) not be advanced on behalf of external third parties that may seek to use the NGA to apply pressure to Board members, or to gain national political exposure for positions that are not directly relevant to the work of, or in the national interests of, local government;
- 8) address issues that will directly improve the capacity of local government to deliver services and infrastructure for the benefit of all Australian communities;

- 9) not seek to advance an outcome that would result in a benefit to one group of councils to the detriment of another; and
- 10) be supported by sufficient evidence to support the outcome being sought and demonstrate the relevance and significance of the matter to local government nationally.

Motions are due by 11:59pm on Monday, 31 March 2025, electronically in the prescribed format.

(a) Policy Implications

In accordance with Council's Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors Policy, authorisation of attendance of Councillors to the NGA must be by way of a resolution of Council.

(b) Financial Implications

The estimated cost per delegate will be in the vicinity of \$4,000.00, which includes registration fees of \$1,500, accommodation at \$400 per night, and air travel at \$1000. There is sufficient operational budget within the Councillor's conferences and seminars budget to fund Councillor attendance at the NGA.

(c) Legal Implications

Council's formal resolution for the attendance of any delegate is required for insurance purposes whilst the representatives are performing bona fide Council duties.

(d) Community Consultation

Nil

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 9 – Open and Collaborative Leadership

9.2 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION TO THE MAYOR

DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER
AUTHOR: Lisa May, Coordinator Governance and Executive Services

1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Instrument of Delegation to the Mayor”, Council:

- (i) revoke all previous delegations of Functions the subject of this Instrument; and*
- (ii) adopt the Instrument of Delegation to the Mayor, as detailed in the attachment to this report.*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to adopt the delegation of functions by Council to the Mayor to ensure that the decisions and actions of the Mayor are supported by appropriate delegated authority.

COMMENTARY

Section 226 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides for the role of the Mayor as follows:

- (a) to be the leader of the council and a leader in the local community,
- (b) to advance community cohesion and promote civic awareness,
- (c) to be the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body, including representing the views of the council as to its local priorities,
- (d) to exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of the council between meetings of the council,
- (e) to preside at meetings of the council,
- (f) to ensure that meetings of the council are conducted efficiently, effectively and in accordance with this Act,
- (g) to ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (h) to promote the effective and consistent implementation of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the council,
- (i) to promote partnerships between the council and key stakeholders,
- (j) to advise, consult with and provide strategic direction to the general manager in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of the council,
- (k) in conjunction with the general manager, to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the council and the local community,
- (l) to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office,
- (m) to represent the council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State and Commonwealth level,
- (n) in consultation with the councillors, to lead performance appraisals of the general manager,
- (o) to exercise any other functions of the council that the council determines.

The draft Instrument of Delegation to the Mayor is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**, which would enable the Mayor to fulfil his obligations under S226.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Nil

(c) Legal Implications

In accordance with Section 226 and Section 377 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

(d) Community Consultation

Nil

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 9 – Open and Collaborative Leadership

10 COMMUNITY SERVICES

10.1 2024/2025 ANNUAL DONATIONS PROGRAM

DIRECTORATE: LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

AUTHOR: Gina Vereker, Director Liveable Communities

1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “2024/2025 Annual Donations Program”, Council:

- (i) approve donations to the total value of \$66,880.25;*
- (ii) endorse the roll-over of the balance of funds totalling \$3,945.75, to the 2025-2026 Annual Donations Program.*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s determination of donations to community groups for the 2024/2025 Annual Donations Program, under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

COMMENTARY

The Annual Donations Program Assessment Panel consisted of Councillors Sutherland, Mears and Brooke.

In accordance with Council’s Policy for the Annual Donations Program, submissions were sought between 19 August and 30 September 2024. Advertising was carried out on Council’s website and social media pages. In addition, a media release was distributed to all local media outlets.

The Annual Donations Assessment Panel met on 14 January 2025, to assess the applications received. The Panel discussed the content of all applications and made recommendations based on the information supplied with each submission.

The recommendations in this report reflect the outcomes of that meeting.

This year 44 applications were received totaling \$184,676.67. Requested amounts ranged from \$500.00 to \$16,555.00. The applications represent a diversity of interest and volunteer commitment from community groups across the Tamworth Regional Council local government area.

Summary of Donations

The Panel recommended donations to the value of \$66,880.25 to the following organisations in the amounts listed below:

Animal Welfare League NSW (Tamworth)	\$3,000.00
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ArtsNational Tamworth (Formerly ADFAS Tamworth)	\$500.00
Barraba Community Incorporated (Barraba Mosaic Group as a sub-committee of)	\$5,000.00
Barraba P A & H Association	\$4,000.00
Barraba Potters and Craft Guild Inc.	\$1,000.00
Barraba Preschool incorporated	\$1,500.00
Bendemeer Preschool Incorporated	\$750.00
Bendemeer Preschool Incorporated	\$750.00
Co Care Inc.	\$500.00
Collegians Junior Rugby League Football Club	\$2,000.00
Connecting With Bricks Inc	\$2,000.00
Families of Veterans Guild	\$3,369.00
Frost Over Barraba as a subcommittee of Barraba Community Incorporated	\$2,332.00
Manilla Historical Society	\$1,429.00
Nundle CWA Art Exhibition	\$1,000.00
PCYC Tamworth	\$2,000.00
Rally Barraba	\$2,000.00
Riding for the Disabled (Association) Tamworth Centre	\$4,000.00
Senior Citizens Barraba	\$500.00
Tamworth CDAT	\$1,000.00
Tamworth Community Garden - project of the Rotary Club of Tamworth First Light	\$3,000.00
Tamworth Dementia Respite Service Inc	\$4,000.00
Tamworth Historical Society	\$3,000.00
Tamworth Legacy	\$1,000.00
Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council	\$3,000.00

Tamworth Networking Group	\$2,000.00
Tamworth Peel Evening View Club	\$750.00
Tamworth Pride Inc	\$3,000.00
Tamworth Regional Craft Centre Inc	\$1,419.00
Tamworth U3A Inc.	\$1,581.25
United Hospitals Auxiliaries of NSW Inc. Barraba Branch	\$2,000.00
Youth Insearch Foundation	\$2,500.00
Tamworth Clarinet Choir	\$1,000.00

A summary of all submissions received, including the Assessment Panel recommendations is **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**.

(a) Policy Implications

The current Annual Donations Policy provides for recurrent funding to the below-listed groups and school/preschools. The Policy also limits these groups from applying separately for the Annual Donations Program:

Barraba Shire Band	\$3,198.00
City of Tamworth Eisteddfod Society	\$12,793.00
Manilla Pipe Band	\$2,132.00
North & North West Community Legal Service Inc	\$1000.00
St Peter's Anglican Church Committee	\$2,132.00
Tamworth & District Highland Society Pipe Band	\$7,462.00
Tamworth Homeless Connect	\$5,159.00
Tamworth Regional Conservatorium of Music	\$30,915.00
Tamworth RSL	\$1,929.00
Tamworth RSL Brass Band	\$5,330.00
Regional Schools and Preschools	\$4,620.00

(b) Financial Implications

The available budget for the 2024/2025 Annual Donation Program was \$147,796, this includes:

• donations to 77 schools and pre-schools; and	\$4,620.00
• recurrent donations	\$72,050.00

The Annual Donations Assessment Panel recommended that Council approve an allocation of \$66,880.25 to community groups in the Tamworth Regional Council area.

It is therefore recommended that the remaining budget be distributed as follows (noting the donations to schools and preschools has already been distributed):

• annual Donations Assessment Panel Recommendation	\$66,880.25
• advertising costs; and	\$300.00
• recommended balance of funds to be rolled over to the 2025/2026 Annual Donations Program	<u>\$3,945.75</u>
	<u>\$147,796.00</u>

The balance remaining in the budget (\$3,945.75) recommended to be rolled over will enable an increased funding pool during the next financial year and enable those organisations that did not apply this year an increased access to funding in 2025/2026.

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

(d) Community Consultation

The Annual Donations program was advertised by way of Council's website and social media pages. In addition, a media release was distributed to all local media outlets.

Applications were received from a wide range of community groups across the Tamworth Regional Council local government area.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 4 - Resilient and Diverse Communities.

10.2 TAMWORTH REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL - 2024 ACTIVITIES REPORT AND APPOINTMENT OF INCOMING MEMBERS

DIRECTORATE: LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

AUTHOR: Haley Fenn, Team Leader, Inclusive Community

1 ANNEXURES ATTACHED

1 CONFIDENTIAL ENCLOSURES ENCLOSED

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report "Tamworth Regional Youth Council - 2024 Activities Report and Appointment of Incoming Members", Council:

- (i) acknowledge and recognise the achievements of the 2024 Youth Council; and**
- (ii) appoint the incoming members of the 2025 Tamworth Regional Youth Council**

- 1) *Albert Tran*
- 2) *Azkah Fawaz*
- 3) *Baylee Whitworth*
- 4) *Bronte Gillan*
- 5) *Caitlin Solomons-croft*
- 6) *Cody Wilson*
- 7) *Edward Blyton*
- 8) *Ella McWilliam*
- 9) *Ella Scott*
- 10) *Hannah Bovis*
- 11) *Kalan Perkins*
- 12) *Kris Mackie*
- 13) *Louisa Hawkins*
- 14) *Megan Carr*
- 15) *Michelle McDonall*
- 16) *Olivia Fitzpatrick*
- 17) *Ruby Woods*
- 18) *Sasha Domingo*
- 19) *Skye Vaughan*
- 20) *Taryn Stewart*
- 21) *Taylah Bell; and*
- 22) *Treasure Nnorom*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to:

- present to Council the activities and achievements of the 2024 Tamworth Regional Youth Council; and
- recommend to Council the appointment of incoming members to the 2025 Tamworth Regional Youth Council.

COMMENTARY

The Tamworth Regional Youth Council (TRYC) provides an opportunity for young people across the Tamworth Region, between the ages of 15 to 18 years, to represent their peers in a local government setting. The group meets regularly to discuss issues facing young people in the community, puts forward ideas to address particular issues, and to advocate for young people on local government related topics. The Youth Council also provides input and direction to Council in respect of a broad range of policy, plans and strategies, providing a youth leadership voice for the future of the Tamworth Region.

2024 Youth Council Activities Report

In 2024, TRYC members played a significant leadership role in influencing Council policy and future direction, including:

- providing input and direction in relation to Council plans and strategies such as the Tamworth Water Security Plan;
- developing its own priority list of actions as its contribution to the implementation of the Tamworth Regional Youth Strategy Action Plan; and
- providing advice to an external stakeholder project run by Family Planning Australia on how young people in regional areas access information online regarding reproductive and sexual health. Youth Councillors also contributed feedback in relation to relationships and explaining the unique strengths and barriers faced by young people in regional New South Wales compared to those in metropolitan areas.

Youth Council Events

The TRYC also delivered two major events in 2024 as part of the annual Youth Week Celebration, being:

- the Skate/Create/Empower Workshop facilitated by Totem Skateboarding and held at Tamworth Regional Skatepark; and
- The Youthie Open Day held at Tamworth Regional Youth Centre.

The events were supported by the local Youth Services sector, which also engaged young people in a range of activities, whilst promoting the diverse range of support services available to young people locally. Over 100 community members attended the events.

Successful Grant Applications

In 2024, the Youth Council was successful in its application for several grant funded project proposals, including:

- \$6,200 for the ‘Summer Holiday Break’ School Holiday Program, funded under the Holiday Break Program: Summer/Autumn 2024/2025, an initiative of the Office of Regional Youth – Department of Regional NSW; and
- \$4,775 for 2024 Youth Week Celebrations, funded under the annual youth week program, administered by the Department of Communities and Justice.

Other Significant Achievements

- the TRYC was invited to judge submissions in Tamworth’s Young Archie competition. Tamworth’s Young Archie competition invited young creative members of the Tamworth Community to pay homage to the people who meant the most to them; and
- late in 2024, two members of the Youth Council were invited by the Minister for Youth, the Hon. Rose Jackson MLC, to attend the NSW Youth Summit held in Sydney in November 2024.

The NSW Youth Summit is a collaboration between the Office for Regional Youth, the Advocate for Children and Young People, and the Department of Communities and Justice and was codesigned by a youth-led working group. The NSW Youth Summit brought together around 100 young people from youth advisory groups to help share the government’s youth portfolio and identify what the government can do to better address issues most relevant to them.

It fostered connection between metropolitan and regional youth and provided an opportunity for youth to build their skills and capacity to advocate for things that matter to them.

Appointment of Incoming 2025 Youth Council

In accordance with Section 5 – Membership, of the Tamworth Regional Youth Council Terms of Reference **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**, a maximum of 25 young people between the ages of 15 and 18 years who reside within the Tamworth Local Government Area (LGA), may be appointed to the TRYC.

In relation to the proposed members of the incoming 2025 Youth Council, it is recommended that all twenty-three who lodged a relevant Expression of Interest (EOI) be appointed. In total there were 23 submissions received. A summary of the 23 profiles is **ATTACHED**, refer **CONFIDENTIAL ENCLOSURE 1**.

The recommended incoming members of the 2025 Tamworth Regional Youth Council are:

- Albert Tran
- Azkah Fawaz
- Baylee Whitworth
- Bronte Gillan
- Caitlin Solomons-Croft
- Cody Wilson
- Edward Blyton
- Ella McWilliam
- Ella Scott
- Hannah Bovis
- Kalan Perkins
- Kris Mackie
- Louisa Hawkins
- Megan Carr
- Michelle McDonall
- Olivia Fitzpatrick
- Ruby Woods
- Sasha Domingo
- Skye Vaughan
- Taryn Stewart
- Taylah Bell
- Treasure Nnorom

(a) Policy Implications

The appointment of new Youth Councillors following an EOI process and evaluation of submissions is in accordance with the adopted Terms of Reference.

(b) Financial Implications

Funding for the activities of the Youth Council is provided from existing recurrent youth services operational budgets, together with the \$15,000 recurrent budget to deliver initiatives under the Youth Council Action Plan.

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

(d) Community Consultation

The Tamworth Regional Youth Council has representatives from High Schools across the region, and actively engages with members of community groups and service organisations.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus Area 9 – Open and Collaborative Leadership

10.3 MOONBI MUSEUM S355 COMMITTEE TRANSFER TO INCORPORATED BODY

DIRECTORATE: CREATIVE COMMUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES

AUTHOR: Bridget Guthrie, Director Art Gallery and Museums

Jodie Archer, Place Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Moonbi Museum S355 Committee Transfer to Incorporated Body”, Council:

- (i) support the process for Moonbi Museum to transfer from a Section 355 Committee to an independent Incorporated Body;*
- (ii) disband the Moonbi Museum Section 355 Committee and withdraw the delegation of the function of management and operation of the Moonbi Museum including the collection of income from users, subject to all income collected being applied to maintenance and improvement of the Moonbi Museum and the production of the Moonbi Newsletter; and*
- (iii) determine that the assets held and liabilities accrued by the Moonbi Museum Section 355 Committee be transferred to the Moonbi Museum Incorporated Body.*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek support from Council to assist Moonbi Museum to transition from a Section 355 Committee to an independent Incorporated Body. The Moonbi Museum have decided to become an incorporated body to gain increased independence and greater autonomy. This process is undertaken in partnership with Council and the transition is supported by the Moonbi Museum S355 Committee, Council staff and the Museum Advisor.

COMMENTARY

In accordance with the incoming Tamworth Region Museum and Archive Strategy, Council is collaborating with collection custodians to reduce risk and improve the effective management of museums and collections throughout the region.

Late 2024, saw the Moonbi Museum Committee minute their intention to proceed with the transition from a Section 355 Committee to an independent, incorporated body. Moonbi Museum S355 Committee minutes are **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 1**. This move is undertaken in partnership with Council and the transition is supported by Council staff and the Museum Advisor. The Museum Advisor Program will continue to support the group to move forward to independence and will facilitate the development of a strategic plan for the group in early 2025.

The Moonbi Museum displays artefacts, photographs and documents that showcase the history of Moonbi and surrounding areas. With some of the images and implements on display dating back to the time of settlement in 1856, the museum provides many fascinating insights into the history of this small, close-knit community.

Currently, a Section 355 Committee the Moonbi Museum is an anomaly within our Local Government Area (LGA). Through the transition to an Incorporated Body, the Committee will now align with other social history groups and historical societies within our region.

Collections which are driven predominantly by local social history content include:

- Nandewar Historical Society (Barraba Museum) (Incorporated Body)
- Manilla Historical Society (Manilla Museum) (Incorporated Body)
- Moonbi Museum (Currently a Section 355 Committee)
- Tamworth Historical Society (Calala Cottage) (Incorporated Body)
- Tamworth and District Family History Group (Incorporated Body).

The Moonbi Museum is an anomaly in the above list of local themed collections, with the structure of a Section 355 Committee. Council has consulted with the Moonbi Museum S355 Committee in regard to the feasibility of transitioning to an incorporated structure as per the recommendations outlined above over several years. It is believed that structural adjustment will provide greater equity of support and consistency of resourcing.

Key recommendations for future development of collections across the Tamworth Regional Council area focus on the maintenance of a partnership approach, with appropriate resourcing and capacity-building opportunities for volunteer collections using a hub and spoke model.

(a) Policy Implications

This proposal assists to address several of the actions in the adopted Tamworth Region Museum Strategy, in particular the proposal aligns with the five key focus areas:

1. Sustainability of Collections – Documentation and Storage
2. Succession Planning and Sustainability for Volunteers
3. Quality Exhibition Development and Cultural Tourism
4. Strategic Partners and Developing a Coordinated Museums Approach
5. Creating a Level Playing Field – Structural Adjustment and Risk Minimisation

The Tamworth Region Museum and Archive Strategy (Strategy), see **ATTACHED**, refer **ANNEXURE 2**, outlines a framework for the support of ten public museum, archives and social history collections located in the Council catchment area and associated with Tamworth Regional Council.

(b) Financial Implications

Funds to the value of \$3,500 to support the transition of Moonbi Museum S355 Committee to an incorporated body will be allocated from the current Place Management - Section 355 Budget. These funds will cover their initial legal fees for incorporation and initial set up and insurance costs through the Royal Australian Historical Society.

(c) Legal Implications

Section 355 of the Local Government Act 1993 enables the Council to appoint a Committee to exercise a function on its behalf by way of a Committee of the Council. This is used in conjunction with Section 377 of the Act to formally delegate functions to the appointed Committee.

(d) Community Consultation

The Moonbi Museum S355 Committee has documented their intention to transition from a Section 355 Committee to an incorporated body.

The allocation of minimal resources for Museums addresses several actions in the Tamworth Region Museum and Archive Strategy and also assists with risk minimisation. Council is mindful of ensuring consistent and equitable support across the network.

The Strategy was developed via consultation with key stakeholders in early 2024, and is supported by prior research and consultation contained in existing collection/community documentation, including Collection Significance Assessments, Strategic Plans, the Community Strategic Plan, the Tamworth Region Cultural Plan and various other Council planning documents.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus area 3 – Prosperity and Innovation

Focus area 7 – Celebrate Our Cultures and Heritage

Focus area 8 – A Strong and Vibrant Identity

10.4 PERMANENT HOME FOR THE TAMWORTH REGIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

DIRECTORATE: **CREATIVE COMMUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES**

AUTHOR: **Bridget Guthrie, Director Art Gallery and Museums**

Nicholas Hawkins, Commercial Property Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That in relation to the report “Permanent Home for the Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive”, Council:

- (i) approve the relocation of the Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive to Suite 2, 218 Peel Street;*
- (ii) allocate the funds required for the relocation of the archive and upgrades to the existing building at Suite 2, 218 Peel Street from rental income received from 218 Peel Street, Tamworth; and*
- (iii) thank the Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive for its patience, on-going volunteering efforts and resilience throughout this process.*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek authorisation from Council to relocate the Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive to Suite 2, 218 Peel Street (previously Lane IT and then Kelly's Real Estate) as its permanent home.

The archive was previously located in Ray Walsh House and was forced to move prior to the building's closure. Currently, the archive has been temporarily housed across three locations as an interim solution. The need for a permanent long-term solution to house the volunteers and their operations is paramount.

COMMENTARY

The Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive (TRFSA) is dedicated to preserving the region's film and sound heritage. It houses about 8,000 cans and cassettes of locally and regionally produced visual material and over 20,000 items on the database, plus historical audio material. Tamworth and Regional material dates back to 1916, and includes many local collections.

Due to the unforeseen public safety issues, the TRFSA was forced to relocate from its original location in Ray Walsh House. This was a challenge that could have easily led to the demise of the archive, its collection and its volunteer team.

However, with the combined efforts of the volunteers and Council officers a solution was found for a temporary premises enabling the continued cataloguing and digitisation role of the archive, but in a reduced capacity. The archive is currently spread across three locations, consisting of the annex space at the Tamworth Community Centre, a meeting room within the Community Centre and storage rooms at Cockburn Cottage in Kootingal.

The annex space is currently used as the working room/working stations for the archive volunteers, but does not have enough room for the volunteers to practically fulfil their operations and the digitisation of the collection. The additional challenges of having the archive spread across three locations creates ongoing issues and inefficiencies in productivity, not to mention frustration from the volunteers.

At the time of initial relocation, Council investigated many options of both Crown (state) and Council owned buildings, but there was no 'fit for purpose' premises available. The proposed long-term relocation to Suite 2, 218 Peel Street was unavailable at that time, but is now available. The premises had been advertised for lease by Council since Kelly's Real Estate vacated in 2023, however, no suitable tenant was found.

After many in-depth discussions to establish the requirements of the archive's operations, the property at Suite 2, 218 Peel Street was identified as it addresses most of the archive's needs and does not change the use of the existing property.

As part of the relocation the TRFSA was required to find a new premise/s which could fulfil the purposes of technology workstations, minor collection storage, digitisation space, meeting room and other administration and technology workspaces. The main purpose is to provide a habitable workspace for volunteer members, ensuring the technology and workflow needs are addressed for the archive. This in turn enables the essential digitisation of the TRFSA.

The proposed new location for the archive also provides an effective street presence, giving the volunteers and the archive much-needed visibility within the Tamworth CBD and a morale boost. The Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive volunteers are a valuable resource for Council and assist to preserve an extremely significant collection. This proposed relocation is an effective use of Council's existing resources and will ensure the legacy and preservation of our history continues into the future.

(a) Policy Implications

This relocation proposal assists to address several of the actions in the adopted Tamworth Region Museum Strategy, in particular the proposal aligns with the five key focus areas:

1. Sustainability of Collections – Documentation and Storage;
2. Succession Planning and Sustainability for Volunteers;
3. Quality Exhibition Development and Cultural Tourism;
4. Strategic Partners and Developing a Coordinated Museums Approach; and
5. Creating a Level Playing Field – Structural Adjustment and Risk Minimisation

(b) Financial Implications

It is important to place a financial value on the contribution the TRFSA volunteers make to Council and the Community. In Council's recent application to Create NSW, it was identified that the archive volunteers contribute approximately 1,525 hours annually. Based at a conservative \$26.48 per hour this is valued at \$40,382.00.

As part of the relocation process there is a requirement to physically move the existing archive and also address the existing building maintenance issues. The costliest maintenance identified is the potential requirement for a new air conditioning unit for the premise and a new security system. Additional costs for a painting refresh, flooring replacement, cleaning and fire safety requirements have also been identified. The estimated costs for relocation and maintenance are \$50,000 to \$60,000. It is proposed that the rental income will offset these costs.

The rental income and existing maintenance budget will be used to address these relocation expenses, building upgrades and ongoing annual building and property maintenance costs.

(c) Legal Implications

The Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive is a Section 355 Committee of Council. Hence, a formal tenant agreement will not be required, as the Committee is classified as an existing part of Council.

(d) Community Consultation

The Tamworth Regional Film and Sound Archive Committee have had a site visit to the property of Suite 2, 218 Peel Street and were unanimous in their support for the proposed relocation. All of the volunteers expressed their relief and gratitude at finding a solution to address their need for a permanent home for the archive.

Although the new premises may not fit the entirety of the TRFSA collection it will house all the administration, technology and film canisters currently located in the Annex and community centre rooms. It will also house a small display in the shop window of Suite 2, 218 Peel Street from the heritage artefacts currently at Coburn Cottage, however, some of the artefacts may still be required to remain at Coburn cottage.

The relocation also addresses several actions in the Tamworth Region Museum and Archive Strategy.

The Strategy was developed via consultation with key stakeholders in early 2024 and is supported by prior research and consultation contained in existing collection/community documentation, including Collection Significance Assessments, Strategic Plans, the Community Strategic Plan, the Tamworth Region Cultural Plan and various other Council planning documents.

(e) Delivery Program Objective/Strategy

Focus area 3 – Prosperity and Innovation

Focus area 7 – Celebrate Our Cultures and Heritage

Focus area 8 – A Strong and Vibrant Identity

11 REPORTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN CLOSED COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATION

That the confidential reports as listed be considered in a Meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST - E026-2025 - OPERATION OF INDUSTRIAL HARD PLASTICS PROCESSING FACILITY

DIRECTORATE: WATER AND WASTE

AUTHOR: Bruce Logan, Director - Water and Waste

1 CONFIDENTIAL ENCLOSURES ENCLOSED

The Council will determine this matter in part of the Meeting closed to the public pursuant to Section 10A(2) (d)i of the Local Government Act 1993 on the grounds that the matter and information is commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on the potential

establishment of an industrial hard plastics processing facility in Tamworth, using grant funding under the NSW EPA Recycling Modernisation Fund – Plastics Technology Stream.

However, it is considered that Council operation of this facility would not be ideal, with a private company; leasing and operating a facility, built on Council land is the preferred delivery option. It is considered important to ascertain the level of market interest in this facility before Council accepts any grant funding and, to this end, an Expression of Interest (EOI) process has been undertaken. Assuming sufficient market interest, then the proposed process is – apply for the grant funding, enter into detailed negotiations with the preferred contractor from the EOI process and, assuming agreement can be reached and the funding is made available, sign an agreement with the preferred contractor and build the facility for the contractor to operate.

If agreement cannot be reached with the preferred contractor, or grant funding is not made available, then the project would not proceed.