



## MINUTES

### ENGAGING AND COMMUNICATING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

#### WAUCHOPE

10 December 2014

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#### **PRESENT:**

Mayor Peter Besseling  
Deputy Mayor Justin Levido  
Councillor Adam Roberts  
Councillor Lisa Intemann  
Councillor Geoffrey Hawkins  
Councillor Trevor Sargeant  
Councillor Michael Cusato

Craig Swift-McNair (General Manager)  
Rebecca Olsen (Acting Director Commercial Services & Industry Engagement)  
Jeffery Sharp (Director of Infrastructure & Asset Management)  
Matt Rogers (Director of Development & Environment)

17 community members

#### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Sharon Griffiths  
Councillor Robert Turner  
Lesley Atkinson (Director of Community & Organisational Development)

The Mayor welcomed those in attendance and introduced the Councillors and Council staff members present.

The Mayor also provided the Acknowledgement of Country.

<b>Applicant</b>	Graeme Murray
<b>Question Submitted</b>	What is the total amount of interest accrued to the funds set aside from the sale of Timbertown, for the purpose of the Wauchope Heated Indoor Pool complex?
<b>Comments</b>	<p>Council does not apply interest earned on investments back into the various individual reserves, nor does it identify the individual interest earned against various reserves.</p> <p>Council earns interest on all our investments. The interest earned across all Council investments is used by the General Fund of Council to fund a range of projects across the organisation. The overall investment interest earned is reported to Council on a monthly basis as part of our monthly Investment Report.</p> <p>No calculations have been made regarding interest accruals. However, a “one off” contribution to the reserve of \$50,000 was made at the end of the 2012-2013 financial year.</p>
<b>Meeting Notes / Actions</b>	<p>General discussion around the various pool options as discussed in the November 2014 Council report and the fact that interest is not accrued to individual financial reserves, particularly in this case the proceeds from the sale of Timbertown.</p> <p>There is some concern that the reserve funds set aside for the Wauchope pool will be spent in Port Macquarie. The Mayor assured the community that this would not be the case.</p> <p>It was explained that the \$50,000 contribution made by Council to the reserve funds in 2012-2013 was a one-off payment by Council.</p>

<b>Applicant</b>	Janette Cook
<b>Question Submitted</b>	How are the Councillors working to change the real and worrying perception of ratepayers, who do not reside within the Port Macquarie township, that most rates, or grant moneys are spent upgrading, beautifying or maintaining the Port Macquarie area, to the detriment of the remainder of the entire local government area of Pot Macquarie-Hastings Council? This has been the feeling of these ratepayers for many years, and more so since the Glasshouse fiasco, which has robbed them of any chance of fairness in distribution of their rates, as so much goes to maintain the white elephant, built in the wrong place, for the wrong reasons, with money we did not have and may never have again.
<b>Comments</b>	Perceptions are often based on emotion rather than fact and Council data clearly shows Wauchope is not being disadvantaged in comparison to Port Macquarie, quite the opposite in fact. The percentage of rating income generated from the Wauchope township is approximately 7.7% of the total rateable income. During the 2013-2014 financial year, approximately 12.7% of Councils overall maintenance spend was spent in Wauchope.
<b>Meeting Notes / Actions</b>	<p>The Mayor addressed the issue of the Glasshouse and that Council are working hard on revenue opportunities / driving income.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the number of projects that have been or are about to take place outside of Port Macquarie, with some major examples being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small village sewer scheme;</li> <li>- Stingray Creek Bridge;</li> <li>- Beechwood Road upgrades.</li> </ul> <p>The Deputy Mayor spoke of the difficulty Council has in applying for and receiving grant funding from the State and Federal government and that often we do not get a choice as to where these funds are spent. If by chance some State and Federal funding became available to Council for the heated indoor pool and related works, then Council would look to see what it could do to contribute to the project. The community were encouraged to speak and write to their State and Federal member and to use people power to try to get some action.</p> <p>The Mayor used the example of the PCYC, which Council originally applied to have in Wauchope, however there was a political decision made that this should be in Port Macquarie and the decision on where to allocate the funding was out of Council's control.</p>

<b>Applicant</b>	Janette Cook
<b>Question Submitted</b>	Were the proceeds from the sale of Timbertown, and the money raised by the community donations for the heated pool, quarantined from other Council income to gain interest to maintain the value against inflation? If not, why not? If so, what is the current value of that money?
<b>Comments</b>	<p>For clarification, Council does not hold any funds raised by the community for the heated pool as stated in the question.</p> <p>The funds that Council holds in relation to the Wauchope Pool are from the proceeds from the sale of Timbertown that are allocated to the redevelopment of the Wauchope Pool via the November 2014 resolution of Council.</p> <p>Council does not apply interest earned on investments back into the various individual reserves nor does it identify the individual interest earned against various reserves. Council earns interest on all our investments.</p> <p>The interest earned across all Council investments is used by the General Fund of Council to fund a range of projects across the organisation. The overall investment interest earned is reported to Council on a monthly basis as part of our monthly Investment Report.</p> <p>The total proceeds from the sale of Timbertown amounted to \$1,570,000. A portion of this has been used for design, investigations etc relating to the pool facility in order to enable grant submissions and the development of the Master Plan.</p> <p>A “one off” contribution to the reserve of \$50,000 was made at the end of the 2012-2013 financial year, with the balance for the reserve being \$1,349,000 as at 30 June 2014.</p>
<b>Meeting Notes / Actions</b>	<p>Refer to comments made in relation to Question 1.</p> <p>The Wauchope Indoor Heated Pool Committee pointed out how difficult it is for them at the moment when the community are donating funds for the indoor heated pool, but no one is able to tell the community anything about the timing of when the indoor heated pool might happen.</p> <p>At this stage, Council is unable to put any timing around this.</p>

<b>Applicant</b>	Janette Cook
<b>Question Submitted</b>	<p>The people of the Hastings Valley, including Wauchope and all residents of villages west of Wauchope, who use the Wauchope Memorial Baths for recreation, school, competition or health reasons, deserve an upgraded and refurbished 50m swimming pool and associated buildings, as well as the heated pool, which they have worked tirelessly to gain. And were promised. Why was the DA so rapidly, and almost secretly, passed to allow another construction to be placed where it had already been decided the heated pool would be built?</p>
<b>Comments</b>	<p>An inclusion in Swimwell’s successful tender for pool management at the Wauchope Pool was the provision of a self funded ‘learn to swim’ indoor facility. This facility does not replace the longer term heated indoor pool.</p> <p>The consent allowing for the installation of the temporary Swimwell indoor heated program pool is conditional and requires its removal upon construction of the proposed 6 lane indoor heated pool.</p> <p>The approval for the major upgrade including the 6 lane indoor heated pool remains current for the site regardless of the more recent consent allowing for the installation of the temporary facility. The reason that the smaller temporary pool is built in the same location at the pool site as the future indoor heated pool, is the limited space available.</p> <p>Council is supportive of the installation of the temporary pool as it is appreciated that this low cost facility will provide significant benefit to the community.</p> <p>Council is continuing to work on external grant funding opportunities in an effort to obtain a level of funding that might allow us to commence some of the redevelopment works at the Wauchope Pool site.</p>
<b>Meeting Notes / Actions</b>	<p>The Director Development &amp; Environment responded in relation to the DA issue as listed above.</p> <p>The Mayor discussed in general terms the pool contractors ability to be able to enhance, improve and add facilities to the Wauchope Pool as part of their lease, whilst obtaining relevant approvals from Council.</p> <p>According to the Wauchope Indoor Heated Pool Committee, the community saw the construction of the small indoor heated pool facility by Swimwell (the lessee at the Wauchope Pool) as an open act of hostility by Council and that there was no communication about this prior to it taking place.</p> <p>The Mayor and Diane Gilbert will meet to discuss how we can best get the facts of the situation out to the community.</p>

<b>Applicant</b>	Diane Gilbert President Wauchope Heated Indoor Pool Association
<b>Question Submitted</b>	As it is believed the monies from the sale of Timbertown goes to the heated 25m pool at Wauchope, is Council in agreement to go into consultation with this Committee?
<b>Comments</b>	<p>The November 2014 Council meeting resolved to the upgrading of the 50 metre pool, filtration system and installation of heating system as the highest priority for delivery in upgrading the Wauchope Pool utilising monies currently held from the sale of Timbertown.</p> <p>Monies received from the sale of Timbertown were put into an internal reserve within the general fund for the benefit of Wauchope projects.</p> <p>The previous Administrator Garry Payne, suggested that these funds be attributed to the Wauchope Pool. Council's resolution is consistent with this approach.</p> <p>Council is happy to work with the Wauchope Heated Indoor Pool Association to continue to support funding applications to federal and state governments.</p>

**Meeting Notes /  
Actions**

The Mayor discussed the upcoming budget process and it was noted that Council does not yet have all the funds required to undertake the upgrade works for the Wauchope Pool as per the November 2014 resolution of Council, The overall project for the upgrade as adopted by Council is approximately \$2.1 million and currently the reserve funds total \$1.349 million.

It was explained that there will be a budget exhibition process commencing in March 2014 where the community are able to make submissions.

The Mayor also discussed the Recreation Plan that is currently on public exhibition and suggested people might like to make submissions to that plan which includes discussion on pool facilities as well as all recreational facilities in the local government area.

A question from the floor was around whether Council would be willing to reconsider the November decision with regard to the pool if some new information came to light in regard to the original intent of the Timbertown reserve funds. The Mayor explained that because there is now a Council resolution with regard to how Council will be moving forward with the pool, the only way Council could change their view on this would be to have a rescission motion against the November decision and that this was unlikely.

For clarification, the Mayor read to the meeting the press release from the then Administrator Gary Payne from 2010 where he stated that the proceeds from the sale of Timbertown would go towards ‘..the upgrade of the Wauchope Public Pool’.

Diane Gilbert referred to the most recent Council financial statements where it states quite clearly that the reserve that holds the Timbertown sale proceeds is titled the Wauchope Heated Indoor Pool Reserve. The General Manager explained that the name of this reserve was changed from its original name of Wauchope Pool Reserve back at the end of the 2012-2013 financial year in an effort to support grant funding opportunities.

A community member present stated that there was little or no consultation about the November decision by Council prior to the meeting and that Council disregarded the views of the community

A community member present asked if they can be consulted once the Quantity Surveyors have done the cost estimates in line with the November 2014 resolution of Council. The Director of Infrastructure & Asset Management will discuss how we might progress this with the Mayor.

The community are concerned about the fact that if the reserve funds are spent on the upgrade of the pool as per the November 2014 resolution of Council, that there will be no matching funds left in the event of grant funding opportunities for the indoor heated pool.

<b>Applicant</b>	Raelene Monkley Rotary
<b>Question Submitted</b>	<p>Given PMHC prior knowledge of maintenance issues and the lack of action, now that Council has applied the Timbertown sale funds for this work, what funds will PMHC be using to fix the Port Macquarie Pool?</p> <p>Why does PMHC suggest/determine that a 'catastrophic event' will occur at Wauchope Pool when the Port Macquarie Pool is in the same condition?</p> <p>When the Wauchope community raises sufficient funds to build the 'hydro' pool, who will meet the costs for the removal of the new tin shed and its foundation concrete slab?</p> <p>Did the Wauchope Pool Tin Shed DA follow the specified time line approval process applied to all DA's lodged?</p>
<b>Comments</b>	<p>For clarification, the proceeds from the sale of Timbertown have never been used for maintenance on the Port Macquarie Pool. The Timbertown funds were set aside for the upgrade to the Wauchope Pool with the November 2014 Council meeting resolving how these funds would be put to use.</p> <p>A catastrophic failure of the 50 metre Wauchope Pool would be the walls crumbling and falling in, given the level of concrete cancer in the structure and the high level of leakage this has the potential to occur</p> <p>The Port Macquarie Pool, while not in prime condition, is in a healthier state than the Wauchope facility.</p> <p>A condition of consent for the temporary program pool at Wauchope is that the developer (i.e. the tenant) must meet the costs for its removal should the proposed 25m indoor pool progress into the future.</p> <p>The development application assessment for the small indoor pool followed the normal application process. The application was publically exhibited and the processing time was 39 days.</p>
<b>Meeting Notes / Actions</b>	There were no specific questions or discussion in relation to the above question and response.

## ADDITIONAL MATTERS / QUESTIONS RAISED FROM THE FLOOR:

### 1. Community Issues:

Patrick Cassegrain spoke about his disappointment that there were not more members of the community present at the meeting. Patrick acknowledged that whilst the indoor heated pool issue is an important one for the local community, there are many broader issues the community could have addressed Council about such as job creation, stemming the flow of young people from the community etc.

<b>Meeting Notes / Action</b>	No action required as a result of this address.
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### 2. Bridge at Railway Viaduct on Pembroke Road:

Question about whether the single lane bridge on Pembroke Road near the railway viaduct was due for upgrade soon, noting it had some work done on it only a few years ago.

<b>Meeting Notes / Action</b>	The Director Infrastructure & Asset Management responded by stating that this bridge was not high on the priority list for bridges, but we would check and come back with a response.
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### 3. Maintenance of Oxley Highway:

Question about why when the Roads and Maritime Services were recently undertaking overlay work on the Oxley Highway, did they stop just past the Coop depot?

<b>Meeting Notes / Action</b>	Council was unable to answer this question as it was an RMS job that Council are not consulted on.
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### 4. Council Planning:

A statement was made about various plans Council have provided in the past i.e. the Wauchope Bike Plan from 1998 and how it was reliant on a range of other plans being adopted and how none of the plans ever seem to come to fruition.

<b>Meeting Notes / Action</b>	No action required as a result of this statement.
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5. Street Banners:

Question about whether Wauchope could have some street banners like Port and Laurieton have.

<b>Meeting Notes / Action</b>	It was explained that the Port banners are funded by the CBD business owners via a special levy and the Laurieton banners are funded by the Chamber. In recent Place Making discussions between Council and the Wauchope community, it was agreed that banners were one of the key priorities for the community and Council will continue to work with the community on how this project can come to fruition.
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