



MINUTES

ENGAGING AND COMMUNICATING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

COMBOYNE 1 March 2017

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter Besseling
Councillor Rob Turner
Councillor Peter Alley
Councillor Geoffrey Hawkins
Councillor Lee Dixon

Rebecca Olsen (Director Corporate and Organisational Services)
Jeffery Sharp (Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management)
Liesa Davies (Acting Director of Community and Economic Growth)
Matt Rogers (Director of Development and Environment Services)

25 community members

APOLOGIES:

Deputy Mayor Lisa Intemann
Councillor Mike Cusato
Councillor Sharon Griffiths
Councillor Justin Levido
Craig Swift-McNair (General Manager)

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

The Mayor also delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.

Applicant	Ms Kirsten Taylor
Question 1 Submitted	Is the Council going to kerb and gutter Main Street near the proposed sewer pump station after they install the rising main?
Comments	Council is not currently proposing to provide kerb and gutter as part of the sewer installation.
Meeting Notes / Action	Nil.

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 2 Submitted	Vegetation in front of Anglican Church at corner of Main Street, Comboyne and Lansdowne Road needs trimming back as vision coming out of Lansdowne Road is greatly impaired. Also, more regular spraying of roadside vegetation is needed to improve road safety in or rural roads (especially gravel roads).
Comments	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council will inspect the vision impairment and action as required. This may be part of winter works if it is not deemed urgent or we will prioritise if required. The spraying of rural roadside vegetation (gravel roads and tar roads) is scheduled principally to assist in grading works. Spraying of rural roadside areas is undertaken approximately 4 weeks before slashing or grading activities commence or prior to rural sealed roads shoulder grading, which occurs on a reactive basis. Currently available resources do not allow for an increase in the current program, noting that Council has in recent years increased funding for additional vegetation clearing on rural roads.
Meeting Notes / Action	Jenny Hurrell asked a supplementary question on roadside vegetation in the area and the proportion of gravel roads - Can we have agricultural machinery signs on the side of the road due to narrow road width and large machinery? The Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management to discuss with staff and inform J Hurrell of outcome.
Completed Action	Customer Reference: 4651/2017 Roads in the Comboyne area are rural by nature and this area is commonly known as an agricultural area, therefore sign posting for agricultural machinery is not considered to be warranted at this point in time.

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 3 Submitted	Maintain desire to develop Lorne Road as bitumen sealed all way from Comboyne to Lorne.
Comments	<p>Council's current focus is to maintain existing infrastructure in the first instance and upgrade where funding is available and on a priority basis across the entire road network. There is currently no specific plan to seal the unsealed section of Lorne Rd, nor any budget allocation in the current financial year to undertake preplanning activities.</p> <p>The sealing of Lorne Rd would require detailed design work due to the narrow carriageway widths on several tight corners and the need to construct retaining structures, additional drainage and potentially guardrail to achieve the required widening. Another significant issue is the location of the existing road outside of the dedicated road reserve in some locations.</p> <p>The ability to seal over the existing pavement and alignment with little prep work is highly limited. The task required for sealing would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey; • Geotechnical investigations; • Concept designs - Staging plan, possible safety audit etc. • Detailed designs - pavement, drainage, structural and road side furniture (guardrail etc.) <p>Lorne Rd is currently graded every 6 months under the existing Special Rate Variation (SRV) funding which is due to conclude in June 2017. Council's intention is to maintain the SRV to continue this higher level of service as per the recent SRV application lodged with the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	<p>It was further noted that there is 14kms of road in relation to the Lorne Road bitumen seal request.</p> <p>Whilst there is a desire to seal the road, this is subject to available funding and available priorities. Unsealed roads and "sealing versus maintenance" continues to be a discussion point during compilation of the annual budget and operational plan.</p> <p>John Hutchison asked if it would be possible to commence the design process so ensure that the project is shovel ready should grant funding become available.</p> <p>The Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management advised that anything is possible and will require further discussion noting that many plans can be developed that do not necessarily lead to construction and hence we give consideration to what plans are developed. There is a roads hierarchy that details local government area road priorities and Lorne Road will be considered in conjunction with that.</p> <p>It was noted that there are some ageing timber bridges that need to be replaced structurally. When these works are undertaken, flooding and economic implications are considered.</p>

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 4 Submitted	Could a Council representative explain to the forum what is needed to establish a RV and caravan camping site at Comboyne Showground, ie what zoning changes and what is to be established with the new sewerage scheme for this rezoning and what other developments would the community need to consider?
Comments	<p>The site would need to be rezoned to allow an RV/caravan camp ground. Once the site was rezoned, a development application would be required for the proposal. Council's current policy is that show societies have an exemption from paying development contributions for up to 18 campsites. The Comboyne Sewerage Scheme has been designed to cater for additional uses such as campground sites at the Showground.</p> <p>Further to the above and for information, the existing toilet block at the Comboyne Showground site will provide a connection to the new sewerage scheme.</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	The Director of Development and Environment explained that Council staff can meet with community delegates to discuss and provide further advice in terms of zoning and development applications. Council staff can also work with delegates on what is required for gaining RV status.

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 5 Submitted	Would like to see a 'walking trail' established within the village with designated historical plaques at sites of historical interest, that detailed the history of the location eg site of old shops, halls, banks, blacksmiths, schools, hospitals.
Comments	<p>Council's Heritage & Culture officer has had a few conversations with the Comboyne community around the opportunities for walking trails in general and specifically the great opportunity for a heritage interpretation trail.</p> <p>Council is supporting community groups in other areas (i.e. Wauchope, Camden Haven) in similar projects. Council Officers are happy to come up and discuss the Comboyne project with a community working group to talk about options, financing, process, and design etc.</p> <p>Council are also currently in discussions with the Comboyne Community Centre with regard to the development of a museum, creative and community hub in Comboyne. This group is currently coordinating a number of tourism and heritage related projects and may be a good point of contact in efforts to establish a community-based working group for a signage trail.</p>

Meeting Notes / Action	Community groups are encouraged to develop their own community plans. These plans provide clear guidance to Council on what the community sees as priorities - and these plans can be considered for planning and budgeting.
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Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 6 Submitted	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Could Port Macquarie-Hastings Council representatives explain to forum where they are at regarding the proposed sewerage treatment works for Comboyne 2. Could Port Macquarie-Hastings Council representatives explain the plans for the supplementary sewerage pump on Thone River that is planned. 3. Land purchased by PMHC Council for sewerage treatment works to be utilised more fully and 'fire hazard' reduced by topping as grazing the paddocks.
Comments	<p>Final tender documentation for the sewage scheme is currently being prepared with the expectation that tenders will be called in the second quarter of 2017. Following close of tenders an evaluation and review of received tenders will be undertaken with a recommendation expected to Council in the third quarter of 2017.</p> <p>A sewerage pumping station (SPS) behind the Comboyne Ex-Servicemen's Club will collect the majority of sewage from connections to the scheme. This SPS will then pump all sewage to the Comboyne Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) site for treatment.</p> <p>Periodic slashing has occurred at the site on an 'as needs' basis. Once the sewerage scheme construction is underway, further refinement of the slashing and other options such as grazing will be considered.</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	General questions and responses.

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 7 Submitted	Additional light over Pioneer Park play area and public amenities area is needed.
Comments	<p>Council staff would have to inspect the site to see what lighting is in the area, noting that we do not generally have lighting in our playground areas.</p> <p>There are generally only lights within the toilet cubicles linked to a movement sensor so they come on when someone enters the room as well a light in front of the doors which is on a “day light timer” so this light comes on when it is dark and stays on until the sun rises the following day. This is so people can see the doors and pathway at night and further lights come on when you open the door to use the facilities.</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	Acting Director Community and Economic Growth sought further information from Jenny Hurrell in regard to the specific reasoning for this, and mobile reception and safety was the response. The Mayor suggested that this could potentially be incorporated into the community plan.

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 8 Submitted	Footpaths in CBD to enhance pedestrian safety where roadway is narrow.
Comments	<p>Council has been undertaking the Small Villages Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) which includes Comboyne. The Council team including consultants undertook a community workshop and walking tour in Comboyne on Saturday 22 October 2016 the outcomes of these engagement workshops have been fed into the DRAFT PAMP Document, which is currently on public exhibition for final community comment to 24 February 2017. Further information can be found at PMHC Listening. http://pmhclisting.com.au/pamp</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	It was further noted ongoing footpath funding is considered by Councillors as part of the budget process.

Applicant	Mrs Jenny Hurrell
Question 9 Submitted	Advisory traffic sign at bridge over Waterfall Creek, Stennetts Road, near the Bridal Veil Falls which indicated 'steep decent' and no rails or sides on bridge ie reduce speed sign also.
Comments	This question may require some clarification, however Council has reviewed the location and the culvert is similar to those across much of the existing road network. In accordance with Councils adopted risk rating criteria, the current arrangement is considered appropriate and any works are assessed as a low risk primarily due to the low traffic volumes and the overall low standing of Stennetts Rd in Councils Roads Hierarchy.
Meeting Notes / Action	Council staff can further discuss specific safety issues in respect of this site if required.

Applicant	Ms Kay White, Treasurer Comboyne Rugby League Football Club
Question 10 Submitted	<p>Would Council consider setting up a sporting field on the Hurrell Farmland (owned by Council) or some other suitable land. We have always played our home games on the Comboyne Showground and in the past this field has been considered good enough. However in more recent times with litigation, insurance, duty of care, becoming a major issue we are finding it extremely difficult to get the showground up to standard after the campdraft and Comboyne Show.</p> <p>A sporting field would also benefit our cricket club who at present have to play their home games at Wauchope as they have no local field.</p>
Comments	As the land owner, Council is not currently considering the establishment of a sports field at this location and any future consideration of plans for such a facility would remain outstanding until such time as construction and the sewer scheme works are fully completed.
Meeting Notes / Action	Council has an adopted Recreation Plan, and some additional feedback from local groups is invited to inform a future review of the priorities of that plan.

Applicant	Mr Paul Thompson On behalf of Ms Nola Pereira
Question 11 Submitted	Requesting consideration for improved maintenance of Latimore Road, Comboyne.
Comments	<p>Latimore Rd is broken into two sections that are both indentified as priority 2 sections and therefore are graded on a 12 monthly cycle.</p> <p>Latimore Rd contains very minimal traffic when compared to other roads across Council's unsealed road network, hence the allocation as a priority 2 road and lower grading frequency. Examples of roads that are priority 1 roads that are graded on a 6 monthly cycle are Wingham Rd and Lorne Rd, which represents Council's highest level of service.</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	<p>Further information was sought from Paul Thompson which was provided.</p> <p>The Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management will investigate claim regarding lack of maintenance over an extended period and contact Paul Thompson to discuss.</p>
Completed Action	<p>Council's environmental health officer has contact Mr & Mrs Handebo and arranged a site inspection.</p> <p>Staff are seeking clarification from Mr Thompson regarding which end of Latimore's Road is being referred to as the two sections are maintained on different cycles. A response will be provided to Mr Thompson offline.</p>

Applicant	Mr Fred and Mrs Narelle Handebo
Question 12 Submitted	Regarding operating times of blower, sprayer on avocado farms (horticulture). Numerous occasions have been blowing, spraying at 5:00am and 10:00pm. These machines have a high pitched noise.
Comments	<p>"Times of use" restrictions only apply to certain domestic appliances. There are no set standards for agricultural equipment.</p> <p>Noise nuisance from agricultural operations would need to be specifically assessed under "intrusive noise" provisions in environmental law. Characteristics of noise that define intrusiveness include volume, pitch, duration, time of day and number of people affected. Such an assessment would take account of the types of operations that could reasonably be expected to occur in a rural area. A council officer would determine if the noise was intrusive and what action should be taken to address the noise.</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	Council staff will get in contact to discuss further.

Completed Action	Customer Reference 4653/2017 Council Staff have been in contact with Mr Handebo regarding this matter.
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Applicant	Mr Tony and Mrs Josephine Frankin
Question 13 Submitted	Would Council consider multiple occupancy or similar on rural agricultural land in order to retain family farm ownership via intergenerational transfer.
Comments	<p>There are two forms of multiple occupancy permitted (with approvals) on rural land.</p> <p>“Dual occupancies” can be built on land that is above the minimum lot size. The majority of rural land in the Comboyne has a 40Ha minimum lot size.</p> <p>A “rural workers dwelling” can be built where there will be no impairment of the agricultural use of the land and it must be demonstrated that there is a proper economic capacity of the agricultural use to support the employment of rural works.</p> <p>Subdivision can be undertaken subject to compliance with the minimum lot size.</p>
Meeting Notes / Action	Community member to contact Council to discuss further.

Applicant	Ms Maureen Vallance
Question 14 Submitted	<p>Mirror for oncoming traffic up hill - O’Sullivan’s Lane onto main road. Blind spot. Cemetery visitors and residents at risk.</p> <p>Fog creating bad visibility on road on corner proceeding from this corner to Comboyne - had two occasions of vehicles on wrong side of road coming down off hill.</p>
Comments	<p>Council do not install mirrors as these are ineffective in allowing motorists to appropriately judge distances of oncoming cars and are heavily affected by approach speeds often leading to unsafe traffic movements.</p> <p>Council staff will however inspect the intersection with regard to safety.</p>
Meeting Notes /	Council has a new Road Safety Officer who will make contact with

Action	Maureen to discuss further with a view to conducting a safety analysis.
Completed Action	Customer Reference CRM 4655/2017 A safety analysis of Sullivans Lane will be undertaken in May 2017 and will include a review of the request above for a mirror. Council's Road Safety Officer will contact Mrs Vallance to discuss this moving forward.

Question Raised from the Floor 1.	Reference was made to Council financial reserves during the meeting.
Meeting Notes / Action	An explanation was provided on the purposes of these financial reserves.

Question Raised from the Floor 2.	Can a machine clean out the stormwater mains?
Meeting Notes / Action	Stormwater is a focus for Council and a program has been developed to commence investigation and maintenance on the network.

Question Raised from the Floor 3.	A question was asked about rural rates and recent increases.
Meeting Notes / Action	Clarification was provided that there has been a recent application to IPART to retain the existing special rate variation of 4.43% that was implemented five years ago. Apart from this Council has only increased by the rate peg which for the next year is 1.5%. The rating system is complex and the rates for individual properties can also be impacted (up or down) by individual property valuations conducted by the Valuer General. It was also noted that the emergency services property levy will also appear on rates notices into the future but that this is not a Council rate.

Question Raised from the Floor 4.	A question was asked about increased airport flights and destination marketing and how do we push tourists into our towns and villages (and conditions of roads in these areas).
Meeting Notes / Action	We aim through tourism marketing and website to add information which promotes everything on offer and to encourage visitors to also visit areas outside of Port Macquarie. Council will continue to be aware of the importance of tourist visitation in our towns and villages.