

Talk Notes
Adam Roberts
Feb 16th 2022 - Ordinary Meeting

Item 9.10
Port Macquarie Hastings Blueprint

This Motion seeks to create a Project Working Group that is tasked with the processes of reviewing ALL of council's Policies, Strategic Plans and Action Plans, with the intent to create a Port Macquarie Hastings 'Blueprint' for the future.

At present, Council has multiple Strategic Plans, Policies, Works Programs, Services and Action Plans, which in some cases, do not talk to each other or are at odds with each other, are out of date, in need of review or potentially will become obsolete over time.

Having said that, there are a number of more recently adopted Plans and Strategies that can offer much information, and if combined, can lead to a more strategic approach to decision making and priority planning.

Future-pacing, the completed 'Blueprint' itself will be a 'Council Adopted Strategic Planning Document' which will outline and overview a condensed and forward-thinking approach to the key strategic needs facing our community.

The Blueprint will in-effect, direct, in strategic terms, how Council moves forward when dealing with the future needs of the growing region we live in, in a more streamlined, effective, efficient and sustainable manner than we are currently experiencing with our current approaches.

This future streamlined approach will be on the basis that by the completion of this project, the Blueprint will have identified, consulted on, and subsequently adopted a range of high-level strategic policy positions and strategic approaches for the future planning and infrastructure delivery for our Local Government Area.

This new approach aims to in part, balance in a sustainable way, our organisations resourcing, expertise and readiness to deliver on behalf of our community.

The Blueprint will also move to highlight in simple terms, on a map, or maps, the location of existing key and critical infrastructure, proposed future needs infrastructure such as road corridors, permissible use of land within our LGA and recreational needs as just some easy to note examples.

This Blueprint will be a public document, for all community members to see in one easy reference guide.

I refer to the bullet points included in Part One of the Motion in front us and note that the key areas of focus and inclusion within Blueprint will be, but may not be limited to;

- Roads, Traffic Management and Delivery
- Affordable Housing and Housing Affordability
- Land Use Planning
- Infrastructure (Water, Sewer and Stormwater) Planning and Delivery
- Amenity
- Vegetation Management
- Sporting Facilities
- Connectivity (Physical & Digital)
- Emergency and Risk Management
- Industry, Tourism and Economic Development Opportunities

It is important to note that through this cornerstone project that the approach will not be a reinvention of the wheel scenario, not least because much groundwork has already been completed across many existing documents and policies, developed through community input via Committees or Project Working Groups and or as Adopted by past Councils.

It is noted that many of these documents and policies have gone through previous processes over many years with much community engagement and it is not the intent to discard out of hand any previous work that has already been developed, rather to review these products and ensure they are meeting and or will meet the future needs of our Local Government Area.

Utilising these already Adopted references will no doubt be helpful to speeding up the process of creating the Draft Blueprint.

It will be the intent of the Project Working Group to review and possibly update, create or re-draft current or new policy positions, strategically, to prioritise future required infrastructure and planning approaches where necessary.

Part two of the Motion before us places the responsibility of leading the process with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, in conjunction with the CEO.

It is very much intended that this project is driven by the Elected Body, through the offices of Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the broader Councillor group, to signal that is has the highest of priorities, but also that this Working Group intends to operate in a way that limits the extra workload on staff wherever possible whilst they continue to deliver the day-to-day operations.

It is also the intent of the Project Working Group to broadly and regularly consult with Councillors as a priority group, Community Members, Subject Matter experts, including Council Staff, State and Federal Government departments where necessary and of course our State and Federal Members.

Point three of this Motion highlights that an Action Plan complete with associated resourcing estimates is to be provided to the March Council Meeting for discussion, debate and possible Adoption before progressing to expending further Council Resources thereafter.

Councillors, this Project, although currently in the concept stage, aims to help create a future for the Port Macquarie Hastings that could, and I am very confident will, enhance the quality of life of our residents, adequately delivery key and critical infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of our Local Government Area and also, just as importantly, to assist Council moving forward in a harmonious, positive, effective and efficient Strategic Direction.

There are many in the community that are seeking Leadership from our elected body and also expect of us new and innovative approaches to dealing with the issues facing our community both now and into the future.

I commend the Motion to all councillors and ask for your support in being part of a landmark project, the likes that has not been developed for our region before, for the greater benefit our community today and for future generations that will call the Port Macquarie Hastings home.