



MINUTES

Operations Committee

held at

Council Administration Centre
Committee Room
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 4 April 2023

at 5:00 PM

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The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 5:08 pm.

1. Acknowledgement of Country

The Mayor acknowledged Wiradjuri Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri nation - the original custodians of the land on which the Lithgow's communities reside and extended respect to our neighbouring nations.

2. Present

Councillor Maree Statham - Mayor
Councillor Stuart McGhee - Chair
Councillor Col O'Connor
Councillor Almundena Bryce
Councillor Deanna Goodsell
Chris Jackson - Chief Weeds Biosecurity Officer - UMCC (Presentation on Item 7.1)

Officers:

Jonathon Edgecombe - Director Infrastructure Services
Mark Gervasoni - Acting Water and Waste Water Manager

3. Apologies

Councillor Eric Mahony
Craig Butler - General Manager
Matthew Trapp - Water and WasteWater Manager

4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Operations Committee Meeting held on Thursday 2nd February 2023 were presented to the Council on Monday 27th February 2023.

ACTION

THAT the Minutes of the meeting of be taken as read and confirmed.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The Chair called for any matters arising from previous minutes.

No matters were raised however the Director of Infrastructure Services gave an overview of the previous meeting.

It was advised that:

- Due to staff absences, there is no report on major projects. It was advised this is unacceptable and would be corrected for the next meeting.
- The Main Street Revitalisation project is on hold temporarily as the project officer responsible has resigned however the recruitment process has commenced with hopes to get this filled as soon as possible to minimise delay to projects.

- There is still a push for the Rydal Toilet blocks with administration consulting closely with UGL to satisfy their remaining requirements.

6. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

7. Staff Reports

7.1. Council's Weed Management Obligations - UMCC

This item was brought forward as UMCC representative Chris Jackson was present to provide a presentation on this matter.

The Director Infrastructure Service provided an overview of the report noting that the UMCC predominately look after weed control on rural roads in our LGA but also in neighboring LGA's , but there is a concern that Council may not be meeting its biosecurity obligations and has a back log of outstanding works due to weather conditions and access, which is to be addressed over a period of 1 to 2 years.

Chris Jackson from UMCC was introduced and gave a presentation to the Committee of the history of the UMCC and works that UMCC carry out on behalf of Council.

As part of the 2018/2019 program, Council contributed funds for inspectorial works, however the funds were used for spraying works instead and not for inspectorial works. Funding for UMCC is split across each Council and the fee is based on land square meterage, it was noted that this a voluntary agreement and the more money Council puts forward then the more work is completed. With the current funding Lithgow is aiming to be on a 3 year service rotation, however current funding facilitates just a 9 to 10 year rotation.

It was noted that chemical usage has gone up, as have prices, but so has labour costs. The particular chemical (selective herbicide) built to tackle weeds such as African Lovegrass and Trusses, has been difficult to purchase due to supply issues. UMCC have been using an alternate chemical however it is not working as well.

The weeds within the Rail corridors were raised by the committee. It was advised that these areas are under the control of UGL on behalf of state government and UMCC have been working with them to control these weeds matters. It was noted that Forestry is also on board to assist with weed control on roads near forestry land.

The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that a report will be presented to Council in the near future in relation to the obligations for the next financial years costs and costs associated to catch up on the back log of work.

Chris Jackson advised the committee that Lithgow has approximately 920km of what UMCC have called as rural roads (80km zone and up) that is looked after. It was noted that for Crown Roads that are fenced on either side of the road, Council is responsible for the weed control. However if there is no fence the land owner is responsible up until the road edge. The Director Infrastructure Services acknowledged this is a matter that should be raised with the NSW Government as there are many kilometres of rural, Crown road.

Councillor McGhee entered the meeting at 5:25pm

The Director Infrastructure Services gave a brief overview of the conversation had thus far.

It was also advised that UMCC have offered services to train staff in relation to slashing roadsides to reduce the risk of further spreading weeds in the LGA. Council administration will take up this opportunity when the recruitment process for new staff is completed.

It was noted that Council staff / contractors have been working on weed spraying in Council owned land leaving UMCC to cover rural roadsides. Whilst the Great Western Highway is under the care and control of Transport for NSW , UMCC also spray the roadsides however Councils are paying for this. It was agreed that that further discussion should be had with the NSW Government in this regard also.

Chris Jackson (UMCC) left meeting at 5:37pm

ACTION

THAT the Operations Committee note the update relating to Lithgow City Council's service obligations for roadside weed management.

MOVED: Cr C O'Connor

SECONDED: Cr M Statham

CARRIED: Unanimously

7.2. Expressions of Interest for Recycling of Demolished Bridge Timber

Council currently has a project in place to replace/ renew bridges along the Glen Davis Road and they have all been delivered this financial year.

The committee were advised that there has been a lot of interest from the local community to purchase the wood and reuse to benefit the community. This report is requesting that the committee put forward a recommendation to Council to endorse an EOI process for local reuse of the timber. This EOI process is not to focus on the value of the timber but rather, the merit of the proposal and the resulting community benefit achieved.

Councillor D Goodsell entered the at this point in the meeting at 5:40pm

The Director of Infrastructure Services gave an overview of the conversation had thus far.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorse the Expressions of Interest process proposed for the recycling of timber, generated from the replacement of the three bridges along Glen Davis Road.

MOVED: Cr S McGhie

SECONDED: Cr M Statham

CARRIED: Unanimously

7.3. Wolgan Road - Proposed Route Selection

The committee were advised that Council had recently endorsed the slope risk assessment and consultation occurred at a face-to-face session with the Wolgan community last week. Staff

developed a four-page flyer which provided further information on the scale of the problem and the impact of trying to restore the issues, putting the matter into simpler language to digest. At the community meeting it was also queried what the next stages of the project will now be. A Community portal has been created to keep local residents informed.

The Director of Infrastructure Services advised the committee of the future scope of works relating to the alternate alignment study. This work has been split into 3 phases.

Phase 1 - Investigation

This will see drones flown in to gain survey data and further develop knowledge and understanding of the surrounding lands and topography. It was noted that the contractors are currently partway through this phase.

Phase 2 - Alignment Assessment

This assessment will focus on areas around the Donkey Steps noting engineering details and land ownership, among a wide variety of other considerations. The alignment will also be based on travel times and access / minimise movement of assets and amenities (ie landline connections). This assessment will also conduct a feasibility study with consideration of environmental factors, aboriginal heritage, results of geotechnical investigations etc.

Phase 3 - Concept Design

This phase will look into the project design, costs and considerations of how to protect the road against instability. Investigations into preventative safety measures such as deceleration bays and safety ramps will also occur.

Cr C O'Connor asked when this will go out to public tender. The Director of Infrastructure is working toward gaining an exemption for these works on the basis that the current contractor has worked on Wolgan Gap and with Council for the past 15 years with the same engineer and already has significant unique knowledge of the valley. It was noted that the construction works will be put out for a design and construct tender (or similar) at a later stage.

Cr D Goodsell raised the Donkey Steps asking for further detail about the ongoing works. It was noted this is going well with concrete matting still continuing but is nearly completed. The residence of the road itself is continuing to improve as works progress and this initial phase of construction is scheduled to complete on 14 April.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council note the update on next steps relating to the Wolgan Valley Proposed Alternative Route Selection process.

MOVED: Cr C O'Connor

SECONDED: Cr D Goodsell

CARRIED: Unanimously

7.4. Disaster Risk Reduction Fund - Regional Resilience Program

The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that Council has recently rejoined the Central NSW Joint Organisation and that he has been elected to chair the regional resilience program. This group will involve 11 Councils working together to discuss:

- Local and regional need analyses and opportunities report, relating to vulnerabilities across the built, social, natural and economic environments.
- Community workshops and training, building networks and capacity for resource sharing and evidence-based decision making.
- Transport asset vulnerability assessments.
- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) embedment into Integrated Planning and Reporting frameworks to improve capacity for Councils to deliver strategic outcomes for their communities.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council note the update regarding Lithgow Council's involvement in the Regional Risk Reduction Program.

MOVED: Cr M Statham

SECONDED: Cr C O'Connor

CARRIED: Unanimously

7.5. Portland / Sunny Corner Road, Portland- Proposed Bus Stop

The Director of Infrastructure Services advised the committee that this matter has now been before the TALC Committee after it was subject to significant prior investigation

It was recommended that an upgrade occurs to the Portland Cemetery intersection to operate as a dual function / congregation area. As there is no budget for this project it is suggested that Council actively seeks funding for these works.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council actively seek grant funding of \$224,334 (excluding GST) to undertake necessary improvements to the Portland Cemetery service lane to accommodate a formal bus stop area.

MOVED: Cr C O'Connor

SECONDED: Cr D Goodsell

CARRIED: Unanimously

8. General Business

WATER & WASTE WATER REPORT

The acting Water and Wastewater manager provide a water & sewer update report via PowerPoint presentation to the committee, discussing the following matters:

- Water Filtration
- Operations at the Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant
- Sewerage - Pipe Relining & Smoke Testing
- IDEA Treatment and UV Sterilisation
- Dewatering waste operations
- STP Discharge & Overflow

Cr M Statham raised that matter of cleaning up the site in and around the Tweed Mills.
Cr D Goodsell asked of Councillors could get a tour of the plants.

Cr D Goodsell left the meeting at 6:32pm

ACTION

THAT the committee note the presentation provided by the Acting Water and Wastewater Manager.

MOVED: Cr M Statham

SECONDED: Cr S McGhie

GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr C O'Connor raised issues with the limited lighting at the pedestrian crossing out the front of Queen Elizabeth Park / Theatre Royale.

It was also raised that the traffic lights at the intersection of Main Street and Lithgow Street need to be urgently resolved as there seems to be significant back up of traffic in the area.

The Director Infrastructure Services advised that this matter has been referred to Transport for NSW for action and further information will be provided as it is received.

9. Meeting Close

Next Meeting: Tuesday 6th June 2023 at 5:00pm in the Committee Room.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 6:41 pm.