



MINUTES

Operations Committee

held at

Council Administration Centre
Committee Room
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Thursday 21 April 2022

at 4:00 PM

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The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 4:06 pm.

1. Present

Councillor Stephen Lesslie
Councillor Deanna Goodsell
Councillor Stuart McGhie
Councillor Col O'Connor - entered at 4:14pm

Officers:

Craig Butler	General Manager
Jonathon Edgecombe	Director Infrastructure Services
Paul Creelman	Transport Manager
David Anderson	Building and Recreation Facilities Manager
Matt Trapp	Executive Manager - Water and Waste Water
Kaitlin Cibulka	Minutes

2. Apologies

Nil

3. Confirmation of Minutes

N/A

4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

N/A

5. Declaration of Interest

Nil

6. Staff Reports

6.1. Operations Committee - Terms of Reference

This item was put on hold until Cr O'Connor arrived to ensure a quorum was met. Item 6.2 was moved ahead of Item 6.1.

The Committee returned to this item at 4:20pm

The Director Infrastructure Services gave an overview of the changes made to the Terms of Reference and the workings of the previous committee. The effectiveness of the previous committee was discussed alongside the need for the committee to maintain more of a strategic oversight of Council's orientation with respect to infrastructure and in turn could achieve more over the term of Council.

The best forum for maintenance requests was also discussed. It was acknowledged that the Councillor request system formalises the request by phone call or email to Directors/ General Manager and thereby ensures prompt investigation of concerns.

The Director Infrastructure Services noted the following updated changes to the terms of reference:

- Committee responsibilities changed to facilitate a high level, strategic committee focus
- Member responsibilities changed to reflect the above.
- Included the Executive Manager Water and Waste Water as Executive Officer should the Director Infrastructure be unavailable
- Frequency of meetings change to quarterly rather than monthly to present higher quality reports and improve the value of the committee while also reducing administrative burden.

The voting of the chair occurred as follows:

1. The Director Infrastructure Services called for nominations for the chair.
2. Two nominations were received for Cr S McGhie.
3. No other nominations were received.

ACTION

That the Committee accepts Cr S McGhie as chair of the Operations Committee.

MOVED: Cr D Goodsell
Carried: Unanimously

SECONDED: Cr C O'Connor

Cr D Goodsell asked if the Committee would continue to have standing items such as the Cullen Bullen Scheme / IWCM. The Director Infrastructure Services confirmed that reports will be presented on key projects at the will of the Committee.

The Committee also discussed the time and days of the committee meetings and was agreed to have them occur on the first Thursday of the quarter commencing at 4pm.

Cr S Lesslie raised concerns of limiting the meetings to occur quarterly and also limiting the range of questions or matters of concern that members and non-members can raise. The Committee discussed these concerns prior to moving the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee

1. Receive, discuss and endorse the proposed Terms of Reference for referral to Council for adoption

MOVED: Cr D Goodsell

SECONDED: Cr C O'Connor

CARRIED:
Against - Cr S Lesslie

6.2. Natural Disaster Impacts

The Director Infrastructure Services gave a summary of the report.

It was noted that in the past 4 months the Lithgow LGA has received 870mm of rain, which is equivalent to 1 years' worth of rain for the area. The large amount of rain that fell has had major impacts to Council's infrastructure and operations, as follows.

Damage to Essential public assets:

There are 4 main projects regarding the variety of Council assets which are in the process being repaired / upgraded as part of the recovery effort, notably:

1. Over \$4 Million in sealing road pavement rehabilitation and reseal. A key example is Browns Gap Road
2. Over \$3 Million in embankment restoration, slope stability improvements and reconstruction. Wolgan Gap Road being a key example
 - The restoration is in design stage with external contractors to be engaged through tender for work restorations. It was also noted that Sir Thomas Mitchell drive was damaged in a minor sense and has since been repaired.
3. \$1.5 Million in unsealed road resheeting and reconstruction. A key example is Cullenbenbong Road.
 - Majority of these project have commenced with local contractors carrying out the works. Many however require out of town contractors and expertise.
4. \$1 Million in damages to key recreational assets such as the Hockey Clubhouse , Trotting Track and Golf Course.

The Director Infrastructure Services advised the committee that defects are continuing to present themselves after this rain period and Council is eligible to work on these under the Natural Disaster Recovery Arrangements for up to 2 years. Unfortunately, payments made by the Federal Government are processed in arrears, with Council completing work before processing claims. However, Council can also make quarterly requests. The committee were also advised that an external engineer is being sourced to assist internally to deliver high quality works in a timely manner. This engineer will be funded through the Natural Disaster funding.

Clr C O'Connor entered the meeting at this point of the meeting at 4:14pm

The rain delays have impacted many projects and is compressing timeframes and deliverables, therefore Council have engaged external contractors to deliver various projects.

The Director Infrastructure Services also raised that costs of materials and sourcing materials are increasing as a result of rain delays and geopolitical unrest. Transported goods have increased up to 17% on average. This does indicate that work in the next year will be increasingly difficult with increased costs of goods, contractors and transport with no increases to associated budgets in the 2022/23 financial year.

The Director Water & Waste Water also advised water operations may also be tightened due to the increasing cost of chemicals and the increased difficulty of sourcing materials such as pumps etc.

The Director Infrastructure Services also noted that when Council took over the cleaning contract a truck was order, however there has been extensive delays and Council are still waiting on delivery of this vehicle.

The Transport Manager noted that materials and contractors are getting harder to source. This has also put a delay on many projects. An example in practice is the Barracks Place project with rectification works not being able to commence until mid-May.

The General Manager also noted that Contractors and Council are doing some great work across the LGA in particular the Marsden Swamp / Kanimbla area. Council is delivering outcomes that improve resilience , embankments and drains, to better Council assets.

Cr S Lesslie asked for an update on the alternate route for the Wolgan Gap Road.

P Creelman advised the committee that there are 2 alternate routes being investigated. The first of these is at the Northern end and established through the National Park , this would be maintained and managed by the National Parks. The second of these is at the southern end and this one would be accessed by 4WD only.

It was also noted that the Wolgan Community are aware of this investigation into alternate routes.

Council will be working closely with National Parks in relation to this project. It was also noted that the formalisation of an evacuation plan for the area is a separate and distinct project which will commence in the 2022/23 financial year.

Cr S McGhie also suggested an education program involving the public regarding overloaded trucks having no weigh station close to the area. The Director Infrastructure Services advised that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) seek approval from Council for approved routes however they are the regulator. Council can however request for more random checks and be more present in the area.

Cr C O'Connor raised the 5 tonne limit that is currently set on the road and asked for additional detail regarding access for heavy vehicles. The committee were advised that the temporary limit has been put in place to reduce traffic to necessary travel only. Should works requiring heavy vehicles and machinery be required, the contractor must make contact with Council and speak with the Transport Manager to gain approval.

The committee went back to item 6.1 to carry out voting for a chairperson, after which the committee returned to vote on the following action.

ACTION

THAT the Committee note the impacts of recently declared natural disasters, and progress relating to the ongoing recovery effort.

MOVED: Cr C O'Connor

SECONDED: Cr S McGhie

CARRIED: Unanimously

6.3. Response - Central West Orana Regional Transport Plan

The Director Infrastructure Services gave an overview of the report. Council put forward a 30-page submission (attached) to Transport for NSW in relation to the Central West Orana Regional

Transport Plan, which has now been closed for comment. The plan outlined predicted regional growth, and provides how the Central West Transport network is developed over time.

Council worked with local experts in the field to gain knowledge and detail working with transport planners in the area to make a suitable submission. Council continued advocacy for outcomes on the Great Western Highway including refreshed infrastructure and heightened standards of maintenance in the area. The need to address key network weaknesses through strategic planning, delivery of physical assets and developing masterplans for the city centers and network resilience studies for better planning and grant funding opportunities was also suggested within Council's response.

An example that was used was to advocate assessment of vegetation control / removal along arterial routes to improve the amenity of our city entrances.

Other notable mentions were in respect to local resilience with the Main Street drainage improvements and other shovel ready projects that Council has been unsuccessful for in grant applications.

Council's EV strategy and the investigation of placement of electric vehicle charging points and new forms of infrastructure / technology , activating rail way yards and more frequent services to the area to offer more opportunities to western lines being used was also discussed.

Cr D Goodsell asked if Council would receive a response to our submission. It was noted that Councils submission will be amalgamated into a broader response but the administration will investigate when this will be released and report this back to the committee for information.

ACTION

THAT the Committee note the submission made with respect to the DRAFT Central West Orana Regional Transport Plan.

MOVED: Cr D Goodsell

SECONDED: Cr S Lesslie

CARRIED: Unanimously

6.4. Current Strategic Projects

The committee noted the need for opportunities to develop Council plans with shovel ready projects and pursuing opportunities to deliver such projects.

- Main Street Flooding

It is well known that the area adjacent to the Main Street Cupro Street intersection is regularly affected by floodwater. It was noted that the current pipework conveying stormwater to Farmers Creek is only 300mm, which is inadequate for the area. Council has a shovel ready design to amplify infrastructure in the area. This project does not fall within the current operational plan but Council will continue to seek grant funding for this project.

Cr O'Connor noted that the upgrade pipes would only be 1200mm rather than 900mm. The Director Infrastructure Services advised that the largest Council is able to install is 900mm without interfering with existing infrastructure (ie. Telstra/NBN/Gas).

- Wolgan Road / Macauley Street Slope Stability

After the 2019/2020 bushfires, this project was identified as a priority with respect to the geotechnical risks in these areas and potential impacts to residential properties. Consultants have been engaged to gauge risk and determine methods to eliminate risk by way of rock bolting, rock removal, netting etc. This project will also seek to educate the community by way of advisory signage and education programs. Council have also applied for grant funding through the Black Summer Funding and the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Program (BLERF) however, both applications were unsuccessful. Council will continue to make applications for funding to reduce and potentially eliminate the identified risk.

- Water Projects

The Director of Water and Waste Water gave an overview the department current strategic projects

The committee were advised that Council are looking at best practice management /IWCM. DPIE provides a guideline on how Council should provide the service with emphasis on pricing for example.

IWCM is the development of plans to address growth and demand on service and resources. This strategy is for large businesses to use for needs and current situations. Extreme risks are identified (such as dams and ageing infrastructure) and the strategy seeks to address these in turn. This will assist Council when applying for funding once these plans are endorsed and adopted.

Clarence to Wang Pipeline Project

The feasibility of this project is currently being assessed, including details surrounding the environmental assessment for treated water to be transferred. A MOU was signed in 2017 to commence the feasibility study to establish water security and pump water to supply the area.

A full brief will be provided at the Councillor Information session proposed to occur on 16th May 2022.

Tarana Water Supply

This matter is an ongoing risk to Council as there is a supply of non-potable water to the residences of Tarana township. A background was provided on the origin of this matter and this now requires an assessment for renewal or removal. Residents are aware of the limitations surrounding the supply and note that this source is deteriorating.

Cr S Lesslie noted that residents should have tanks for potable water and use the non-potable for toilets, gardens etc.

Smoke Testing

This program has been very effective in the past. Smoke testing is one of the projects that are easy to deliver and offers good results, however can create a large amount of administrative work. During the 2016 to 2018 program the defective rate reduced by 50% each time. This program does yield good results for Council and the residents to reduce the stormwater presenting within the sewer system, however the older areas are harder to test due to old infrastructure or no connections.

ACTION

THAT the committee notes the progress of the projects under investigation by Council

MOVED: Cr C O'Connor

SECONDED: Cr S McGhie

CARRIED: Unanimously

6.5. Remaining Roads Projects

The Director Infrastructure Services gave an overview of the report whilst the committee reviewed the Gantt chart with the projected timeline for remaining works to be carried out.

Council crews and contractors are working together on both operational and capital works to get them completed by the end of the financial year.

The committee noted that of the 4 grading teams, 2 working on general maintenance matters and the other 2 on major capital improvement works.

Works in relation to drainage, culvert works and remedial works to the wall within Farmers Creek are expected to be completed within this financial year.

The large amount of ground water has the potential to delay projects but still have many projects finished by the middle of May 2022.

Staff are meeting with contractors in relation to remaining sealing projects across the LGA. Maps have been provided with quotes expected to be presented for endorsement at the next Council meeting.

The Infrastructure Team and Water & Waste Water are working together in relation to water main renewals and road sealing works.

ACTION

THAT The Committee note the proposed program and labour distribution for the upcoming 3 months of Council's endorsed road renewal program.

MOVED: Cr D Goodsell

SECONDED: Cr C O'Connor

CARRIED: Unanimously

7. General Business

Nil

8. Meeting Close

Next Meeting: TBD

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 5:37 pm.