

MINUTES OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE OF UPPER HUNTER SHIRE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2022 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS COMMENCING AT 12.30pm

PRESENT:

Cr Ron Campbell (Chair), Cr Maurice Collison, Cr Allison McPhee, Cr Tayah Clout and Cr Sue Abbott

APOLOGIES:

Nil

IN ATTENDANCE:

Greg McDonald (General Manager), Karen Davies (Director Infrastructure Services), Jeff Bush (Manager Strategic Assets), Sam Wooden (Manager Works Delivery), Gavin Newton-Smith (Asset Engineer), Grahame Wilson (Manager Strategic Projects), Nilakshi Fernando (Acting Manager Water and Sewer), Greg Longman (Manager Water and Sewer), Natalie Collins (Infrastructure Services Support Officer), a member of the public.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Nil

ISC.02.1 *REVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE CHARTER*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Greg McDonald – General Manager

AUTHOR: Karen Davies - Director Infrastructure Services

RESOLVED That Council adopt the revised Infrastructure Services Committee Charter with a change of commencement time to starting at 12.30pm.

Moved: R Campbell

Seconded: A McPhee

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ISC.02.2 *WORKS PROGRAM - INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES - WATER AND SEWER*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Karen Davies - Director Infrastructure Services

AUTHOR: Nilakshi Fernando - Acting Manager Water & Sewer

RESOLVED That the Committee receive the report and note the information.

Moved: A McPhee

Seconded: T Clout

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ISC.02.3 *WORKS PROGRAM - INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Karen Davies - Director Infrastructure Services

AUTHOR: Sam Wooden - Manager Works Delivery

RESOLVED That the Committee receive the report and note the information.

Moved: T Clout

Seconded: A McPhee

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ISC.02.4

STRATEGIC AND CAPITAL WORKS UPDATE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Greg McDonald - General Manager

AUTHOR: Karen Davies - Director Infrastructure Services

RESOLVED That the Committee receive the report and note the information.

Moved: M Collison

Seconded: A McPhee

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ISC.02.5

MR358 WILLOW TREE ROAD UPGRADE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Karen Davies - Director Infrastructure Services

AUTHOR: Gavin Newton-Smith - Asset Engineer

RESOLVED That the Committee receive the report and note the information.

Moved: T Clout

Seconded: A McPhee

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ISC.02.6

ANSWERS TO COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Karen Davies - Director Infrastructure Services

AUTHOR: Natalie Collins - Infrastructure Support Officer

RESOLVED That the Committee receive the report and note the information.

Moved: M Collison

Seconded: T Clout

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Questions

Questions taken on Notice will be answered in the next Infrastructure Services Committee Agenda.

Cr Sue Abbott:

1. Can you please provide an update to the Cassilis Sewerage Scheme?

Director Infrastructure Services:

We have requested for the design to be reviewed to ensure it is cost efficient. A short term option may be utilising trucks to empty tanks on a regular basis. Meetings have been held with funding bodies about funds available.

2. How is the Cassilis community managing with their current systems?

Director Infrastructure Services:

There is saturation around the tanks although the current systems are still operational.

3. Can you please advise of the status of the playground under the bypass at Bill Rose Sports Complex and is this functioning again?
Director Infrastructure Services:
The area under the bypass was affected by the flood.
Manager Works Delivery:
Some of the playground bark and softfall were lost in the floods. This has now been replaced and is accessible for use.
4. Can we investigate the option for fencing around the playground area at Bill Rose Sports Complex for the safety of toddlers and infants?
Director Infrastructure Services:
We welcome submissions to the DPOP for this request.
5. There has been instances of cars parking on the new Moobi Road footpath, can something be done about this?
Manager Works Delivery:
We will need to investigate options.
6. Ref 8 – Merriwa Driver Reviver – Was the building decommissioned in January?
Manager Works Delivery:
The toilets have now been removed and top dressing has occurred. The remaining building will be going to Tender for its removal as a number of groups are requesting this building be assigned to them for their removal and use.
7. Ref 26 – Cameron Bridge Replacement – Can you please explain the error in the headstock castings and will there be any cost to Council for this?
Manager Projects Strategic Projects:
There was an error in the drawings between the headstocks and the piles. This is a contractor error, they have taken this and will be reviewing the documents. This will cause a two week delay to be corrected. There will be no cost to the Council for this error.
Director Infrastructure Services:
The first preference is for contractors to bring works back on track. If this cannot be done they will need to update the schedule to ensure it is corrected. If a contractor is responsible for the delay this is their responsibility and no cost will be incurred by the Council.
8. Ref 27 – Moonan Brook Road Upgrade – Will the report be available to all Councillors?
Director Infrastructure Services:
This report will form part of next month's Agenda which is accessible via the Council website.
9. When will Coulson's Creek Road be opened?
Director Infrastructure Services:
This could be up to 2 years. There are no short term options to allow traffic to access the road as any option could be extremely dangerous and would increase costs.
10. Has there been a media release in regards to Coulson's Creek Road not being open for another 2 years?
General Manager:
Yes. There was a Community Meeting held at Merriwa stating the timeframes of the work and the costs. There has also been face to face, radio and social media to advise of the current progress.
The Tender for Schedules of Work will assist in determining the timeframe of works.
Cr Collison:
During the Community Meeting, the feeling is that the community has accepted what has happened. We have continued to speak with local members. Further discussions will be made when we have more information on the final design.

Cr Campbell:

Yes it has been accepted and an inconvenience to the local community. Timeframes should not be publicised until the design and tenders are complete.

11. Is there an update on the investigation by the OLG being conducted for the MR358 Coulson's Creek Road?

Director Infrastructure Services:

There has been a request from the OLG recently for more information as there has been a change in staffing at OLG which has prompted further information to be requested. This request was received in late January.

Cr Campbell:

There is a feeling that there is some community members who are trying to pin the blame on particular persons. This is not helping to move forward. The damage is done and we now need to move forward to fix the issue.

12. Michael Reid from Murrurundi has requested further information about the electric vehicle stations for Murrurundi?

General Manager:

This has been taken on notice.

13. A business has enquired about how to get direction signs for their business?

Manager Works Delivery:

There is an application form to be completed and the costs can be found in our Fees and Charges.

14. Can the Scone Neighbourhood Resource Centre be tidied – there is a number of weeds and rubble?

General Manager:

This will be taken on notice.

15. Has Council made a decision for the Murulla causeway in light of new submissions and requests from locals?

Director Infrastructure Services:

There is some misinformation being circulated regarding the planned low level bridge and its impact on the footbridge. Community consultation will be planned for March in order to provide time to notify the community. There is information that a planned low level bridge will impact the view of the swinging bridge which is incorrect. A visual plan will be provided at the meeting which will help clarify the view.

16. It is my understanding that any form of bridge low or high will impact the view on the swinging bridge as recorded in the Heritage Impact Report and that we couldn't vary the original scope for funding? This topic is currently quite distressing to the community.

Director Infrastructure Services:

The theory is that a low level bridge should not change the view for the swinging bridge. We can request a variation but it is not always approved. The funding is for a low level bridge and it is not logical to replace a causeway with another causeway.

Cr Ron Campbell

1. In respect to the Cassilis Sewerage System, Cardno have cost the Council around \$500,000 in design fees, why is that?

Director Infrastructure Services:

The scope was laid out in the contract. The only way that there can be a change to the scope is through a written variation to the contract.

We haven't changed the scope as yet, what we have done is ask Cardno to look for efficiencies in the design to reduce costs to construction. So at this point in time, we have not asked them to change the design, we have just asked for them to tell us how it *might* be changed.

2. Can we vary from the original request and is Cardno be held accountable for the Cassilis Sewerage Scheme?
Director Infrastructure Services:
No. We would need to investigate the previous scope and any variations. We will be investigating previous projects to ensure that this is not an ongoing issue. Our Project Managers have the experience to undertake the budgeting for their projects however in recent times some of the costs have increased significantly due to Covid, materials scarcity and an over-abundance of projects due to government funding creating competition for contractors.
3. Will the costs to pumping tanks in Cassilis short term come from the grant?
Director Infrastructure Services:
The scope is very strict on the guidelines for what the grant funding can be used for. To change this a variation to the scope needs to be applied and granted before changing anything.
General Manager:
The construction of the sewerage system is grant funded however the short term solution to emptying tanks would be community funded if it went ahead.
4. The land near the Merriwa Sewerage Plant will be soon coming up for sale, will Council look into purchasing this land?
General Manager:
There is a number of performance issues with this plant which was outlined in the report for example the sludge lagoons. The Council only require the land necessary for an easement. A discussion will be followed up in relation to an easement depending on the recommendations from the EPA to address performance issues.
5. Ref 8 – Merriwa Driver Reviver – The toilets have now been demolished, what will be happening with the old building?
Manager Works Delivery:
A Tender will be going out for the old building as there was more than one interested party.
6. Ref 8 – Merriwa Driver Reviver – how will we move it?
Manager Works Delivery:
The Tender will provide required information and will be the fairest way.
7. Note: Ref 17 – Cassilis Town Revitalisation – The old toilets have now been removed and replaced. The playground is also in. The community are very happy with this result. Thankyou.
Director Infrastructure Services:
Noted: There is also the Community Consultation booked in for 24th February 2022 at Cassilis for those that are interested.
8. Ref 25 – Merriwa Racecourse Amenities Upgrade – Can you please provide an update on the progress of this project?
Manager Works Delivery:
We are on track to have this completed by March. We are aware there is a race meet booked for April.
9. Ref 32 – Cassilis Sewerage System – Can you please provide an update on this project? Will a report be provided?
General Manager:
This has been sent back to the designers to review and look at reducing the costs.
Director Infrastructure Services:
A report will be provided in April.

10. Ref 39 – Moobi Reservoir High Pressure Zone/Water Supply Investigation – Can you please provide an update on the progress?

Director Infrastructure Services:

Concept designs have been received. The next step will be to start consultation.

11. Can signs be placed out on Settlement Lane that is a dry road only? The water was dispersed onto the neighbouring properties contour bank to flow into Bow Creek.

Manager Works Delivery:

This will need to be investigated.

12. Can you advise what is happening with Avocado Road about 3kms up the road in Merriwa? This road is not due for another scheduled grade until April however there is a number of washouts on the road?

Manager Works Delivery:

We will organise for this to be inspected.

13. Can you please provide an update on Whitney/Bow Street crossing?

Manager Works Delivery:

The water is still running through. Works cannot be done until the water has gone and location is inspected.

14. Can you please provide information about the subdivision that is currently being assessed for Cullingral Road, if the property owners install pipes/box culverts at the creek crossing will Council maintain these? Who will be responsible for them?

General Manager:

As discussed in the Environment and Community Services Meeting, it is dependent on the development application and what the classification of the road. At this time it is my understanding that this road is a private road and the structure will remain privately owned. If it is a Council owned road the structure will be transferred on completion of the development. If it is a crown road they will direct the ownership to whom will be responsible for it.

15. Ringwood and Killoe causeways, are we carting gravel across these crossings?

Manager Works Delivery:

This will need to be investigated.

16. There is a cement causeway past the council maintained area on Worondi Road that has been washed out below it, can you advise whether this is a council road or crown road?

Director Infrastructure Services:

This will be investigated.

17. Can the Traffic Committee investigate the double parking of the school bus in Merriwa out the front of a business on McKenzie Street?

Cr Collison:

This has been added to the Agenda for the Traffic Committee.

Cr Allison McPhee

1. Note: The team managing Bill Rose Sports Complex have done a great job at getting the area back on track after the recent flooding event.

Director Infrastructure Services:

Thank you, we appreciate the feedback. The flooding remedial work is a priority.

Cr Maurice Collison

1. Ref 27 – Moonan Brook Road Upgrade – This was scheduled to be completed in April 2022 now it has been pushed out until June 2022. Can you please provide an update as to why and the progress of the project?

Director Infrastructure Services:

A response can be provided in a report for the March meeting.

2. Noted: Cr Collison expressed his confidence in the CRM (Customer Request Management System) to other Councillors for the community to lodge a request in the system. This creates a paper trail and a response in writing. This also creates an immediate response that their request is being dealt with.

Director Infrastructure Services:

There are many avenues to lodge a CRM, it also creates a great opportunity for them to receive updates on the matter and referencing the CRM number will assist in locating the CRM and any comments that have been provided.

Cr McPhee:

This can also assist if there are many requests on the same issue, this can prompt that the issue may be a priority.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 1.35pm