

10.2

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT - 6 MARCH 2024

File No: 07.00064

RECOMMENDATION:

That the recommendations of the Policy Committee Meeting of Bathurst Regional Council held on 6 March 2024 be adopted.

REPORT:

The Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting of Bathurst Regional Council held on 6 March 2024 are attached.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

BATHURST COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN – OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:

Objective 6: Community leadership and collaboration.

Strategy 6.4 Meet legislative and compliance requirements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

01 **Inform** - to provide the public with balanced and objective information to help them understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 060324 Policy Minutes Only [10.2.1 - 9 pages]

**MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
OF BATHURST REGIONAL COUNCIL
HELD ON 6 MARCH 2024**

1. PUBLIC FORUM

MINUTE

Stuart Pearson – Appointment of Staff - Asked if the General Manager appoints all staff below his level?

DCSF commented that as per the Local Government Act, the Councillors only appoint the General Manager. The General Manager may consult Councillors on staff appointments.

Vanessa Comiskey - Spoke to legal actions involving Council. Costs alleged to be greater than \$350k. Expressed concerns that Council has wasted this money which could have been used to fund the New Years Eve Event. When will Council be making its decisions in relation to New Years Eve?

MAYOR noted that he met with Bathurst Business chamber and should know in a few months.

Ms Comisky asked if Council paid for a Christmas Party?

MAYOR noted councillors had a zero cost party.

Ms Comisky asked why greater than \$50k for ID profile subscription?

DEPBS noted that it is not compulsory. It is high quality information on community characteristics. The public can use, the fees are for the data.

Ms Comisky noted that NDIS access is very difficult and that people are not to assume it's easy to access.

Jorgina Comiskey – Cultural Representations and NYE Party in the Park – Miss Comisky noted that she would like to see more cultural representation in the community, through our exhibitions. Asked that Council support the NYE Party in the Park in the future. Miss Comiskey commented about the lack of cleanliness in some of the public amenities.

Russell Rogan – Condition of roads at White Rock – Noted that the roads at White Rock were damaged during the gas repair. Asked if there was funding to repair the roads?

DES noted that Council received some funding but not enough to cover all maintenance. Noted Council receives grant funding from state and federal government but nowhere near enough.

Mr Rogan asked if Council could fix some of the edges? Also asked about the proposed BARN project at Chifley Dam and if Council will be running sewer and water to them?

DCCS noted that existing systems will be used.

Mr Rogan referred to the junior cricket competition and commented that if Council proceeded with a SRV then junior sport will suffer.

Elaine West – Climate change and Go Kart Track - Thanked Council for taking Climate Change seriously. Discussed gas use in buildings. Noted that the Go Kart Track is not climate friendly. Asked if the track will be EV's only?

MAYOR noted no.

Ingrid Pearson – Gas usage, Winburndale Dam, Kings Parade and Machattie Park – Praised Council for discussion on gas usage. Asked how is Council planning to move away from Gas usage?

DEPBS noted that the recommendation is that gas is replaced with renewables.

Ms Pearson thanked Council for the tour of Winburndale Dam. Noted that it was brilliantly organised. Asked if the timber pipes will be replaced?

DES noted that funding was only for the Dam wall. Noted there is an existing program for replacing wood pipes and that Council has received funding to replace this pipeline. Most of these funds have been diverted to stormwater harvesting.

Ms Pearson asked about the cost to replace.

DES noted will be greater than \$15 million.

Ms Pearson thanked Council for Kings Parade and for the works underway on Machattie Park. Asked if there was an estimated completion date?

DES noted that Stage 1 is almost done (Russell Street Side). One tree needs to be investigated. Noted that Keppel Street side will take longer.

Stuart Driver – NYE, Senior Management contract renewals, SRV and Wattle Flat resident - Mr Driver encouraged Miss Comisky to approach Youth Council. Noted his hopes that the NYE fireworks discussions resolve the conflict of interest. Noted that Senior Management Contract Renewals should not extend beyond the term of next Council. Commented on the SRV and noted that he does not believe Council is operating effectively. For example, there have been multiple water main bursts near his home. Noted that this is inefficient. Raised matter regarding a 80-year-old resident at Wattle Flat needing advocacy to have road issue resolved, access to their property has been disrupted due to road works. Sought to have a meeting with DES to discuss this matter.

Bob Triming – Disability advocate – Raised matter about Bathurst Bullet and noted he will wait for a response from the Mayor. Thanked DES for fixing the toilet doors in the Civic Centre and for the repairs to the footpaths. Thanked staff for their exceptional work

with the Winburndale Dam tour. Discussed Library budget and asked if there is money in the budget for toilets in the library?

DCCS noted that engineering has this on their list and it is planned.

DES noted that a grant has been received and will be used for another toilet block. The sewer fund will pay for this.

Mr Triming noted that the restaurant on William Street is still not accessible.

Sophie Wright – Go Kart Track – Thanked the Mayor for responding to her email about last week's meeting. Noted that the definition of 'Majority voting' has now been clarified. Ms Wright referred to the decision of the previous Council to provide a loan for the go-kart project.

MAYOR noted that he did not vote in favour of the decision on the Go Kart Track.

Ms Wright asked how the Go Kart Track went from national standards to international standards?

MAYOR noted that it is a combination of consultation with the community, Councillors and staff.

Ms Wright asked if it was the Go Kart Club that wanted the higher space track?

MAYOR noted that he didn't think so.

Ms Wright noted that the former Mayor, Mr Bourke appeared to be seeking to resolve the matter, at that time. Ms Wright noted that playing the blame game is not a good way forward.

Public Forum closed 6.42pm.

2. MEETING COMMENCES

MINUTE

Meeting commenced at 6.42pm.

Present: Cr W Aubin (TEAMS), Cr K Burke, Cr B Fry, Cr J Jennings, Cr G Hanger, Cr M Hogan, Cr I North, Cr R Taylor

3. RECORDING OF MEETING

4. PRAYER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

A minutes silence was held in commemoration of the recent passing of Mr Stephen Jackson.

5. APOLOGIES

MINUTE

MOVED: Cr I North SECONDED: Cr K Burke

RESOLVED:

That the apology of Cr A Smith be accepted and leave of absence granted.

That the attendance via audio-visual link of Cr W Aubin be accepted.

6. MINUTES

6.1. Confirmation of Minutes

File No: 07.00064

MINUTE

RESOLUTION NUMBER: POL2024-1

MOVED: Cr K Burke SECONDED: Cr M Hogan

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting of Bathurst Regional Council held on 6 December 2023 be adopted.

7. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

NIL

8. MAYORAL MINUTE

NIL

9. RECEIVE AND DEAL WITH GENERAL MANAGER'S AND DIRECTORS' REPORTS

9.1.1. POLICY TO TRANSITION AWAY FROM GAS USE AT COUNCIL FACILITIES

File No: 13.00092

MINUTE

RESOLUTION NUMBER: POL2024-2

MOVED: Cr B Fry SECONDED: Cr I North

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- (a) consider the draft Transition away from gas use at Council Facilities Policy.
- (b) place the draft Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.
- (c) if no submissions are received, adopt the draft Transition Away From Gas Use at Council Facilities Policy.
- (d) If submissions are received, provide a further report for Council's consideration.

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

MINUTE

Cr K Burke –

Aquatic Centre: What's the process around future planning around the Aquatic Centre?
Basic maintenance issues already occurring.

DES noted that a contractor maintains the facility. It is difficult to control mould. Noted that the water fund is under stress, there are no available funds for major upgrades.

Cr Burke asked if there are plans for long-term upgrades?

DES noted have put in for discussion on a 5-10 year plan.

Bats: What strategies are used to discourage bats?

DES noted that Council adopted a plan in 2018 but legislation limits actions when bats are pregnant. Council has looked into deterrents. Tree repair works are as a result of damage by the bats. Arborist is advising on long-term health of the park. Noted the tree planting on the river takes a long time to see results.

Raglan Park Upgrade: Noted the path is through drainage area.

DES noted the path goes through a drainage channel. Council is looking at alternatives, but they have limited budget from the grant.

Cr I North –

Medical Centre: Discussed medical centre and requested a report to be presented to the next meeting on the progress and provide timeframes. Commented on the car park situation and asked if this was a sticking point could the hospital upgrade be part of thinking. Council the budget be staged?

Victoria Park: asked about whether this park could be made available to assist in resolving the Bathurst Hospital car parking challenges?

Garthouse Road: Commented on the exceptional work done on the recent roadworks.

Lagoon Road: What are the plans for this road to be fixed, between O'Connell Plains Road and Chifley Dam Road?

DES noted that money is the issue. There is only a small amount of grant funding.

Cr G Hanger –

- Thanked the Mayor for the acknowledgement of Stephen Jackson. Cr Hanger's daughter was also in the car. Spoke of Mr Jackson's contribution to marathons, Parkruns, and community fun-runs. Acknowledged Mr Jackson's involvement with the World Cross Country Championships that were hosted in Bathurst and mentioned that Mr Jackson was involved in measuring the marathon track that was used in the 2000 Sydney Olympics.
- **MAYOR** offered his sympathies.

Cr M Hogan –

Homelessness and housing: Provided an update on the Homelessness and Housing sector, and sought a clarification of the difference between social and affordable housing.

DEPBS noted that in planning, social housing is the nature of the entity providing housing. Affordable housing is defined by the impact of income on individuals.

Cr Hogan asked if Council has looked at the provision of social housing in Bathurst? Noted that she has consulted with people who say they don't want social housing in 'clumps'.

DEPBS noted that Council does not have a specific policy to encourage or prescribe this type of development. There are risks in targets. Incentives may be required. The size of the lot/development is important. Housing diversity can make big impacts on affordability. This is also important for attracting people to Bathurst. There is scope for Council and the community to have that discussion.

Cr Hogan noted she would like to follow this up.

DEPBS noted he will take this on notice.

Cr B Fry -

Aquatic centre: Cr Fry asked if the transition to renewables is successful, could the pool be opened for longer hours?

DES noted that this is being investigated but heating is expensive no matter how it is done.

Cr Fry noted the seasonal fringes where it gets a bit cold.

DES noted Council's report looked at this, \$15k per week using gas. This is Council's decision to make.

General business closed 7.12pm

11. MEETING CLOSE

MINUTE

The Meeting closed at 7.12pm.

CHAIR:
