

VC: GR

14 March 2011

Dear Councillor/Sir/Madam

You are invited to attend an **WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE** of Ashfield Council, to be held at the Haberfield Library, 78 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield on **TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2011** at **6:30 PM** or at the conclusion of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Yours faithfully

VANESSA CHAN
General Manager

SEE ATTACHED AGENDA

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE - 22 MARCH 2011

AGENDA

1. **OPENING**
2. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LOCAL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY**
3. **APOLOGIES/REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
4. **CONDOLENCE AND SYMPATHY MOTIONS**
5. **MOMENT OF PRIVATE CONTEMPLATION**
6. **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Disclosures to be made by any Councillors who have a pecuniary / non-pecuniary interest in respect of matters that are before Council at this meeting.
(22/03/2011)

7. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF COUNCIL/COMMITTEES**

NIL

8. **STAFF REPORTS**

8.1 Policy Directions For Works and Infrastructure

9. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

10. **CLOSE**

ASHFIELD COUNCIL

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE - 22 MARCH 2011

8 SUMMARY OF STAFF REPORTS

- 8.1 Policy Directions For Works and Infrastructure. Tony Giunta - Senior Engineer - Infrastructure Management. Report submitted.
(11/03/11)

Infrastructure>Asset Management
h:\reports.bp\Committees\Reports\WIC220311SR_1.doc

WIC 8.1 Attached

RECOMMENDATION

- 1/2 That the Information in this report be noted.
- 2/2 That Council translate the major Works and Infrastructure policy issues presented in this report into motions for consideration at the upcoming Australian Local Government Conference

Subject	POLICY DIRECTIONS FOR WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE
File Ref	Infrastructure>Asset Management
Prepared by	Tony Giunta - Senior Engineer - Infrastructure Management
Reasons	To provide Council with an overview of major Works and Infrastructure policy issues
Objective	That Council translate these major Works and Infrastructure policy issues into motions for consideration at the upcoming Australian Local Government Conference

Overview of Report

The community faces some interesting challenges as we move forward into the future as a result of a number of current and emerging issues which have an impact on Council's infrastructure. Consequently this report seeks to provide an overview of some of the major infrastructure policy issues that need to be considered at a National level in order to provide Council with the necessary assistance so as to sustain these changing conditions and deliver the level of service that is expected by the community.

Background

The services that Council provides are primarily made available through infrastructure assets, and the sustainable management of these assets is an important element in providing the community with an acceptable level of service. The responsibility of providing infrastructure is shared by a diverse range of Federal, State, Local and non-government bodies as well as businesses and individuals within the broader community. Although Council is primarily responsible for the management of infrastructure assets, often the responsibilities and control between Council and other organisations overlap.

Most of the assets and infrastructure were originally built by other organisations and handed over to Council to maintain and renew. Although it may have appeared as a good thing at the time, no one has "done the numbers" on life cycle cost consequences of rapid development in the 60's and 70's. In the Hawker Inquiry it was recognised that these assets are unlikely to be funded from traditional local government revenue to maintain the required level of service.

As we move forward into the future our community faces some demanding challenges, brought on by current and emerging issues that are impacting on Council's infrastructure. These issues include:

- Population growth
- Ageing workforce
- Decline in skilled workforce
- Ageing population
- Ageing demographics

Policy Directions For Works and Infrastructure

- Economic – increasing cost of living
- Increased traffic congestion
- Reduced on street parking
- A changing socio – economic community (smarter community)

With these challenges in mind Council faces an even tougher battle to provide suitable service levels to the community. The demands of the community are increasing at a higher level to what can be delivered by Council with the resources available. Under these circumstances it can be said that Council is managing the decline, and not growth.

For the equation to be turned around Council requires assistance from higher levels of Government to be able to realign itself to the changing conditions and issues that are emerging, in order to deliver the communities expectations.

Some of the major works and infrastructure issues that need to be addressed at a National level or whole of Government approach are summarised below:

Sustainable Asset Management of Local Roads (Lack of Funding for Local Roads)

Council's greatest asset is the roadway consisting of approx 1,000,000 sqm of asphaltic concrete with supporting footpaths and stormwater networks. This infrastructure is known as primary or critical infrastructure as it constitutes the main framework for other secondary and supporting infrastructure within a local community. Also it represents the highest single item expenditure for Council in any financial year, and will continue to do so.

Currently funding is provided from the following sources to assist Council in maintaining its local roads:

- Roads to Recovery Program – Federal Government
- Financial Assistance Grant (local roads component) – Federal Government
- Various Special Grants - Roads and Transport Authority

This funding only goes part of the way to adequately maintain the local roads and unless further funding is made available from the above sources the condition of the local roads will continue to decline. There is clearly a gap between the needs and the funds that are available.

New Aquatic Centre Infrastructure

Council is progressing with the development of the master plan for the new Aquatic Centre facility, with an estimated value of approximately \$19.5M. The needs of the community have changed since the existing aquatic centre was originally built and as a consequence a facility to reflect this is required. In order to provide this facility, the source of funding will be a critical component to its implementation. With a major asset such as this one, Council will require considerable funding assistance if this project is to proceed.

The existing aquatic centre is outdated and could be considered as obsolete, with very old infrastructure and technology which makes it very inefficient and costly to maintain and run. Apart from providing the local residents with a much better and modern facility it will also benefit neighbouring Council residents.

Policy Directions For Works and Infrastructure

Sports and Recreation Facilities

With the growing population the demand for sports and recreational facilities has increased quite dramatically, and the trend is that the demand will continue to increase into the future. Open space in an urban environment is at a premium so it is difficult for Council to acquire land to establish more recreational areas to keep up with this increasing demand. Without the possibility to increase facilities Council is faced with a higher concentration of usage, which in turn requires higher levels of maintenance in order to provide facilities that are acceptable and safe to the public.

Over time Local Government has assumed increased responsibility for the maintenance and management of recreational areas and facilities and spends a considerable proportion of its budget on these facilities. However with the increasing demand for these facilities Council can not continue to sustain the expenditure required to provide a suitable level of service. Funding programs are essential to facilitate the ongoing maintenance required for these facilities to be adequately maintained and continually upgraded.

Integrated Transportation, Traffic and Parking Facilities

Transport is a critically important issue for local communities - and therefore for local councils. Local roads comprise 85% by length of Australia's road network. They are the essential means of accessing homes, businesses, health, education and community services and recreational opportunities, and are thus a vital component of the infrastructure of our local communities.

However, provision of transport services in Australia is facing substantial challenges. It is estimated that by 2020, Australia's total freight task is expected to almost double; urban passenger trips will increase by about a third; and non-urban passenger travel could rise by about 70%. This growth will place much greater demands on local transport infrastructure and the safety margins of our road system.

The issue of passenger transport and community infrastructure has largely been seen as a state/territory and local government responsibility, with much less emphasis by the Australian Government.

Australia needs more than ever a national coordinated push towards integrated transportation which local governments can not do on their own. Local Government is a crucial partner in the efficient and effective planning and delivery of road services, but the Federal Government needs to play a stronger role in developing the nation's ability to integrated transportation, traffic and parking facilities.

Disability Discrimination Act Compliance

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) seeks to eliminate discrimination "as far as possible", against people with disability. Public transport is a service covered by the DDA and in 2002 a Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT) was issued to assist public transport operators and providers to meet their obligations under the DDA. In order to comply with these requirements there is a considerable cost implication to Council in order to establish any new infrastructure or modify its existing infrastructure so that it conforms to these standards.

Policy Directions For Works and Infrastructure

Council is committed to delivering DDA compliant infrastructure but there is a need for a higher level of assistance from a national level that should be channelled to this area so that the necessary infrastructure can be transformed to the required standards.

Financial Implications

Nil

Other Staff Comments

N/A

Public Consultation

N/A

Conclusion

Council has an opportunity to inform the State and National political agenda at the upcoming Australian Local Government Conference on the infrastructure concerns listed in the report. Any motion made on these issues will help Council to resolve ongoing community concerns in these areas.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no supporting documents for this report.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1/2 That the Information in this report be noted.**
- 2/2 That Council translate the major Works and Infrastructure policy issues presented in this report into motions for consideration at the upcoming Australian Local Government Conference**

STEPHEN JOANNIDIS
Director Works and Infrastructure