

Ordinary Meeting

Meeting Date: Monday, 28 March, 2022
Location: Council Chambers, City Administrative Building, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 5.30pm

Membership (Quorum - 7)
All Councillors

Addendum Agenda

Mayoral Minute

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MM22.5 Mayoral Minute - Budget Review.....1

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HPERM Ref: D22/118292

Recommendation

That the CEO reports back to Council on the following

1. Any projects that are not tied to grant funding that could be postponed in order to divert further funding into urgent road repairs post weather event.
 - a. The report should also include details of:
 - i. The impact of not applying the Special Rate Variation, and how this will affect the budget overall and specifically the roads budget
 - ii. The compounding impact should Council continue to keep rates below what is required to meet the demands in service.
2. Any Natural Disaster payments that Council qualify for, what is included and how will they be administered following the State Government Natural Disaster declaration of the Shoalhaven LGA.

Details

Shoalhaven has been subjected to 16 consecutive years of natural disasters, all have had varying degrees of impact on different parts of our city, including the loss of life and homes.

The global pandemic has created numerous challenges. One of the ways Council chose to provide support to the Shoalhaven community was to offer a \$300 rebate to our rate payers and to not pass on the Special Rate Variation, of which 60% was to go towards road repairs.

Although these financial decisions may have been appreciated at the time, they have had a deleterious impact on Council's budget and consequently, Council's ability to meet community expectations in respect of the maintenance of assets, and in particular roads.

This summer of La Niña weather, which is no doubt super charged by global warming, has made the conditions on our roads more challenging than ever before. The impact of the conditions of the roads, is now affecting so many parts of Council's business, from overwhelming numbers of calls and emails, maintenance requests and social media posts, it is clear that there needs to be collective action to address this issue.

Councillors have embarked on the preparation landing stage of the 2022/2023 budget and will have to consider many variables in setting the financial plan for the year ahead. We must consider as many variables as possible to fund more road works across the city.

These considerations will include the prospect of postponing much needed & wanted infrastructure projects to the future, rate rises and options that may be placed to gain grant funding. In attacking the problems, Councillors will of course have to make very difficult decisions regarding priorities for the year ahead.

The intention of the mayoral minute is to have a clear view on what options there are and how best to apply them.

Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation to all the Shoalhaven City Council staff, recognising how tirelessly they have been working under very difficult circumstances, a work force that has given above and beyond for an extended period of time, through multiple challenges including the recent flood event.