

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING

Lithgow council endorses notification to IPART for SRV

Council has made a major commitment to improving the city's infrastructure, growing the local economy and improving service delivery. To create the capacity for these activities, councillors endorsed to move forward with an application for a permanent increase to land rates.

The overall income from land rates will increase by a maximum of 45.7% (including a 3.7% government approved amount for inflation), but **the average resident will have their increase limited to 27.7%**. Discussions also continue with the mining and power generation businesses around the creation of a future fund, targeted at economic transformation. This could see the total land rate increase fall to around 38%.

Statewide road emergency

Lithgow City Council is one of 126 Councils in NSW that have had natural disaster declarations within the last 12 months. Council resolved to join with Local Government NSW and the Country Mayors Association of NSW in supporting their declaration of a Statewide Road Emergency. The LGA NSW and Country Mayors Association of NSW are calling for:

- An acceleration and significant increase in funding for the \$1.1 billion Fixing Local Roads and Fixing Country Bridges program from the New South Wales Government.
- A boost to Road Block Grant funding to compensate for the damage to the regional road network from the Federal Government
- New funding to provide councils with plant machinery and skilled workers to expedite road repairs from the Federal Government.

Lithgow community private hospital

The Council considered a report on progress with the negotiations to retain specialist medical services provided by the Lithgow Community Private (LCP) Hospital.

Council has been active in advocating for a long-term agreement which ensures that much needed specialist medical services will continue to be available in Lithgow.

LCP Chair, Robert Swinton has advised Council that normal operations will continue beyond November 2022. Discussions with the Local Health District around a sustainable model and service agreement that provides certainty for both parties are ongoing.

Council will continue to collaborate with ironfest

The Council re-affirmed a commitment to Ironfest when it considered a late request for funding. The request was for a substantial amount of money but lacked clarity about the deliverables. With all available funds allocated for this year, the Council chose to continue to work with the Ironfest organising committee for a return of the event in 2023/24

Disability Inclusion Action Plan Progress Report

A report was received on Councils' progress implementing the Disability Action Inclusion Plan (DIAP). The DIAP takes a holistic approach to ensuring people with a disability have better access to services, information and facilities offered by Council. By implementing these actions, not only do people with disability benefit, but older

people, people with acute or short-term injuries, and parents with young children will also benefit.

2021/22 Annual Report

The 2021/22 Annual Report explains the many diverse projects and programs that the Council undertook during 2021/22. It also acknowledges the ever changing and challenging operating environment (COVID 19 restrictions, natural disasters, and global economic challenges which have resulted in rising costs and short supply of both materials and resources). Some of the many projects undertaken during 2021/22 include:

- \$2.161m funding received for the EPA Bushfire Generated Tree Waste Program to address 8.7 tonnes of fire affected dangerous trees & residual green-waste generated by the 2019-20 bushfires. 80 Individual landowners and business, public land and roadside reserves benefited.
- The Rydal Footbridge and Turon Gates Bridge were renewed under the NSW Governments Timber Bridges program.
- Over 1,000 trees planted in the district, including expanding forage and habitat plants for the Purple Copper Butterfly as part of a joint program with Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association.

Advocacy priorities for NSW State Election

Drawing from the community priorities identified in the Community Strategic Plan 2035, Council agreed on its advocacy priorities to bring to the attention of candidates and political parties in the lead up to the NSW State Election in March 2023.

1. *Sustainable Local government* Substantially review and reform funding arrangements for local government to provide the sector with the capacity to meet the many challenges of the 21st century.
2. *A diverse, strong and resilient local economy*
 - Finalise and implement the Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan – cross-government commitment, affirmative action, significant increase to the levels of funding provided for economic transformation (recognising that the task of transforming the Lithgow economy will require significant supporting funding over 7 – 10 years).
 - Bring forward new employment precincts - utilise the capacity of the NSW Government to examine and facilitate the re-purposing of the city's brownfield sites for employment purposes.
 - Secure Lithgow's housing growth – resolve the issue of traffic access
3. *Sustainable transport options* linking the Central West and Western Sydney to the Marrangaroo Urban Release Area.
 - Implement the Lithgow EV Strategy
 - Improve road connections - Advance the Great Western Highway upgrade (including addressing the matters raised in Council's submission)
 - Recognise and act on the potential for Lithgow to act as a hub for improved rail services to the east and west –
 - » More frequent rail services between Lithgow and Western Sydney
 - » Consider the potential for faster and more frequent passenger rail services between Western Sydney and regional centres in the Central West.

WORKS PROGRESS REPORT

- *Get Active NSW Grant* – contract planning works completed for successful footpath construction projects for Lithgow (Hartley Valley Road, Maple Crescent), Wallerawang (Barton Avenue, Pindari Place), Cullen Bullen (Castlereagh Highway), and Portland (High Street)
- *Civic Ballroom* – building improvement works completed, including fire service and electrical / lighting upgrades
- *Kremer Park Grandstand, Portland* – heritage consultancy completed, detailed designs and scope of works being prepared for release of tender documents
- *Lithgow Library* – replacement of façade and awning completed
- *LINC Building* – building improvement works completed, official opening scheduled for 7 December 2022
- *JM Robson Aquatic Centre* – Solar panel installation and landscaping completed, sauna installation planning underway
- *Fixing Country Bridges Round 1* – Crown Creek Bridge replacement completed and opened to traffic, works started on Airly Bridge replacement
- *Fixing Country Bridges Round 2* – planning, studies and approvals commencing for Charles Street Rydal and Red Hill Road, Palmers Oaky
- *Pipers Flat / Range Road intersection* improvements – sealing works completed, linemarking scheduled for December 2022 to complete the project
- *Rydal Toilets* – consultation with UGL Regional Linx and additional approvals being prepared.
- *Cullen Bullen Sewer* – Reticulation and on property services nearing completion, STP beginning to be constructed after rainfall and inclement weather as well as long delays in delivery of items has caused issues.
- *Portland Water Mains* – all mains renewed and connected by 16th of December 2022 with large sections of east Portland renewed and trunk main to service Portland Foundations site ready and in use.
- *Smoke Testing of sewer lines* – has begun in the Lithgow area and will be used as part of an ongoing program to detect illegal connections. Larger areas will be completed as part of program such as extension estate in early 2023.
- *Sewer relining* – CCTV of mains to identify defects for repair being completed December 2022 with relining to begin in Extension estate area in early 2023.
- *Browns Gap Road* has continued to show movement on the subsidence site which has delayed the rectification of the subsidence. The unstable part of the escarpment is looking to be worked on at the same time. Browns Gap Road will remain closed until further notice.
- *Wolgan Gap* remains closed until further notice. Wolgan road is being assessed for the best way to resolve the latest landslip as it is a complex issue due to the amount of unstable material. Works have begun on the Donkey Steps emergency access. It is hoped to have it prepared just prior to Christmas but this will be dependent on weather and site conditions. Access to Wolgan Valley for residents and businesses only, is via the Old Coach Road through the National Park.