



Central Coast Council
Business Paper
Extraordinary Council Meeting
15 April 2021





COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

ONE – CENTRAL COAST IS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) FOR THE CENTRAL COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

ONE – CENTRAL COAST DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND IS OUR ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

ONE – CENTRAL COAST BRINGS TOGETHER EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO SET KEY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

One - Central Coast will shape and inform Council's business activities, future plans, services and expenditure. Where actions are the responsibility of other organisations, sectors and groups to deliver, Council will work with key partners to advocate on behalf of our community.

Ultimately, every one of us who live on the Central Coast has an opportunity and responsibility to create a sustainable future from which we can all benefit. Working together we can make a difference.

RESPONSIBLE

WE'RE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND DELIVERING A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN ALL OUR INTERACTIONS.

We value transparent and meaningful communication and use community feedback to drive strategic decision making and expenditure, particularly around the delivery of essential infrastructure projects that increase the safety, liveability and sustainability of our region. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure our planning and development processes are sustainable and accessible and are designed to preserve the unique character of the coast.

Good governance and great partnerships

G2 Communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on transparency, understanding, trust and respect

There are 5 themes, 12 focus areas and 48 objectives



All council reports contained within the Business Paper are now aligned to the Community Strategic Plan. Each report will contain a cross reference to a Theme, Focus Area and Objective within the framework of the Plan.



Meeting Notice

**The Extraordinary Council Meeting
of Central Coast Council
will be held in the Council Chamber,
2 Hely Street, Wyong on
Thursday 15 April 2021 at 10.00 am,
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

1	PROCEDURAL ITEMS	
1.1	Disclosures of Interest	4
2	ADMINISTRATOR MINUTE	
2.1	Administrator's Minute - Administrator's Final Report	6

David Farmer
Chief Executive Officer

Item No: 1.1
Title: Disclosures of Interest
Department: Corporate Affairs



15 April 2021 Extraordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2021/00035 - D14578115

Chapter 14 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("LG Act") regulates the way in which the councillors and relevant staff of Council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public functions.

Section 451 of the LG Act states:

- (1) *A councillor or a member of a council committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.*
- (2) *The councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:*
 - (a) *at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or*
 - (b) *at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.*
- (3) *For the removal of doubt, a councillor or a member of a council committee is not prevented by this section from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because the councillor or member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in section 448.*
- (4) *Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting, if:*
 - (a) *the matter is a proposal relating to:*
 - (i) *the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, or*
 - (ii) *the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, and*
 - (a1) *the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the councillor in the councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person*

1.1 Disclosures of Interest (contd)

(whose interests are relevant under section 443) in that person's principal place of residence, and

- (b) the councillor made a special disclosure under this section in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.*

- (5) The special disclosure of the pecuniary interest must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and must:*
 - (a) be in the form prescribed by the regulations, and*
 - (b) contain the information required by the regulations.*

Further, the Code of Conduct adopted by Council applies to all councillors and staff. The Code relevantly provides that if a councillor or staff have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed as well as providing for a number of ways in which a non-pecuniary conflicts of interests might be managed.

Recommendation

That Administrator and staff now disclose any conflicts of interest in matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.



Item No: 2.1
Title: Administrator's Minute - Administrator's Final Report
Department: Administrator

15 April 2021 Extraordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2021/00035 - D14587828
Author: Dick Persson, AM, Interim Administrator

At the request of the Minister for Local Government, as part of my appointment as Interim Administrator, I am to deliver a final report into the Central Coast Council's financial situation at the end of my term – 29 April 2021.

The final report outlines a number of recommendations to the Minister for Local Government. It should be read in conjunction with my two earlier reports; 30 Day Interim Report and the 3 Month Progress Report

The Long-Term Financial Plan which I adopted recently will deliver relatively small surpluses over the 10-year period of the Plan and this will allow over \$100 million of Council's \$565 million debt [including restricted reserves] to be repaid. It does rely upon IPART agreeing to a Special Rate Variation of 15%.

It should be noted that of the \$75 million budget 'hole' we are dealing with, most of the money comes from reducing the cost of doing business, including cutting around 250 jobs. The proposed rate increase will deliver \$27 million pa in increased revenue.

There is pressure by many to hold a public inquiry into what went wrong here. With due respect to those people, Mr Hart and I have investigated what went wrong and published those findings. Many of those calling for an inquiry don't like my conclusion because I have made it very clear the financial collapse is not due to the local government amalgamation.

I have formed the view that the merger of the Gosford and Wyong LGAs was always going to be one of the harder ones, and that it was well short of completion when Councillors returned in 2018. It is very clear that the new Council had little interest in continuing the hard work of achieving efficiencies and using those savings to expand the delivery and quality of services. Instead they embarked upon a programme of expansion of both capital and recurrent programmes with no attempt to establish how they were going to be paid for.

There is strong opposition to the suspended Councillors returning before the September 2021 election. From my dealings with the CCC community there is little enthusiasm for a return to an elected Council until the Council has re-established itself as a 'going concern'.

My appointment of Mr David Farmer as the new CEO will go a long way to achieving that community support. But it will take some time to do so.

2.1 Administrator's Minute - Administrator's Final Report (contd)

Given the above, I feel the best chance of CCC emerging as a strong and viable merged council will best be achieved if Mr Farmer and a new Administrator are given an extended period to make further progress with the complex tasks needed to complete a successful merger.

"To take whatever action is necessary to prevent the return of the currently suspended Councillors, and to delay the September election to allow a formal inquiry to determine what is needed to achieve the successful merger of the two previous councils".

I believe such an inquiry would have far greater community support than an inquiry that would be used by competing political actors trying to blame each other for what occurred.

We know what occurred, it is now time to look ahead and help ensure the success of the 6th largest council in Australia.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this vibrant community. It has allowed me to meet many wonderful community members, and work alongside many committed and talented council staff.

I formally move:

- 1 *That Council note the tabling of the Administrator's Final Report.*
- 2 *That Council note the Administrator has provided a copy of the report to the Minister for Local Government, The Hon Shelley Hancock MP and the Deputy Secretary, Local Government, Planning and Policy, Mr Tim Hurst.*

Attachments

- 1 Administrator's Final Report [Click here for attachments](#) D14587993