

AMENDED ITEM



Item No: 4.1
Title: Questions with Notice
Department: Governance

25 May 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/00039 - D13964151

4.1 Questions with Notice

The following questions were submitted by Councillor Hogan;

Big Prawn

- *Could staff please investigate who owns the 'Big Prawn' which is situated at the old petrol station that was burnt down on the Pacific Highway?*
- *Could staff please make enquiries as to whether the owner is prepared to sell or donate the 'Big Prawn' to Council and at what cost? The rationale is to relocate the 'Big Prawn' further south on the highway so it has residence as the gateway to the Central Coast coming in from the north.*

Response provided by the Director, Connected Communities:

The land the 'Big Prawn' is situated on is located in the Lake Macquarie Local Government Area. Council staff have made initial investigation to ascertain the land owner of this site, however this has involved a GIPA request prior to these details being released. Following release of this information, staff will be able to investigate further with the owner of the 'Big Prawn'.

The following question was submitted by Councillor Kyle MacGregor:

Arable Land or Agricultural Land Use Studies

Are Council staff aware of any arable land or agricultural land use studies that have been conducted within the Central Coast LGA in the past decade to identify issues such as optimised agricultural yields, crop compatibility, soil studies and the best possible land uses for the farmland on the Central Coast? If this data/studies exist are they freely or publicly available or able to be shared with Councillors or the Central Coast Community?

This is a complex question requiring research and resources to provide an appropriate response. As a result it is not possible to provide a response for this Council meeting and it is proposed to provide the response for inclusion in the Business Paper for the meeting of 22 June 2020.

The following question was submitted by Councillor Kyle MacGregor:

Community Campaign – Operation Soap

Is Council aware of the community campaign operation soap in public toilets Central Coast and does Council have any plan to respond to this community campaign or issues raised by community members online and in local media about lack of soap in public toilet facilities?

Response provided by the Director, Connected Communities:

Council is aware of the community campaign, operating via Facebook, called 'Operation Soap in Public Toilets Central Coast'. This page has been 'liked' by employees as a means of monitoring what is being posted.

At this stage, Council is not responding to the Facebook campaign, however it will manage the community's placement of soap. If the soap is found to be vandalised, or causing a risk, it will then be removed.

Council have responded to numerous customer requests and provided Councillor responses in relation to Council's response to providing soap in public toilets. The response has been consistent.

Council does not provide soap or soap dispensers in its public amenities due to a history of them being subjected to vandalism, resulting in soap on the floors. There is a high risk of people slipping and injuring themselves.

Our neighbouring Councils; Lake Macquarie, Cessnock and Newcastle are also not supplying soap dispensers to their public amenities and are not planning to do so. We note that Newcastle Council did install soap dispensers to their public amenities in response to COVID-19 and within a few weeks they were being vandalised and replaced on numerous occasions. As a result, Newcastle Council removed all soap dispensers from their public amenities.

Maitland Council are providing soap dispensers to high use sites due to these public amenities receiving a higher level of service and surveillance. This is standard for Maitland Council and has not been introduced as a result of COVID-19.

Council's libraries, Senior Citizen's Centres, pools and leisure facilities are currently closed, apart from the outdoor pool at Gosford. Council is in the process of having hand sanitiser dispensers installed for when these venues reopen. These venues already have soap dispensers installed in their toilet facilities.

Council will be developing a Public Toilet Strategy which will allow Council to look at ways to include soap in a safe manner in any of the new builds or renovations that occur.

Attachments

Nil