

AMENDED ITEM

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

9 June 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/00039 - D13993758



Questions with Notice

The following question was submitted by Councillor Greenaway;

Keep Cups

Covid-19 has led to the cessation of the use of keep cups.

Consistent with our draft Waste Strategy that seeks to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill, and in accordance with restrictions imposed by Covid-19, is Council aware of any initiatives, using other materials (for example, ceramic cups), that can be used so that people can continue to safely support local cafes but also reduce the amount of waste generated by takeaway coffees?

Response provided by the Director, Roads Transport Drainage and Waste:

The 'keep cup' industry has been rapidly expanding across Australia over recent years with many organisations and commercial entities supplying a wide variety of branded reusable cups for purchase and membership to a range of different swap and go coffee cup schemes. The choice of participation by a coffee vendor to a scheme is a matter for the coffee vendor to determine.

The choice to not use 'keep cups' as a result of the Covid 19 virus has been taken voluntarily by some, but not all, coffee takeaway vendors and Council is not aware of any legal restrictions or advice that forces that choice. This choice may have led to an increase in the use of disposable cups, although data on the actual increase is not available. It is possible that the increase in the use of disposable coffee cups at some vendors may be offset by increased numbers of people staying at home and the temporary closure of some coffee outlets.

Although Council does not promote any single vendor or scheme over another, we do support the principle and objective they aspire to achieve. Our own Draft Waste Resource Management Strategy (Strategy), which has a vision to promote the Central Coast as a creative environment for developing a local circular economy that values the recovery of resources and advocates prevention of waste, lists 19 key actions to support waste avoidance and resource recovery.

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Relevant actions within our Strategy that align with, and support the use of, the reusable cup principles are:

1.1 Enhance community awareness and action around waste avoidance and reuse through targeted education campaigns.

1.2 Engage local businesses to support uptake of opportunities for avoidance of waste and increased recycling.

1.3 Identify avoidable Council waste streams and improve waste management behaviours and use of disposable items.

With the support of Council's Economic Development team, relevant industry groups and stakeholders will be approached to gauge their interest in promoting and implementing this initiative on the Central Coast.

The following question was submitted by Councillor MacGregor:

Central Coast Skate Park Strategy

When is the Central Coast Skate Park Strategy likely to come before Council?

Response provided by Director, Environment and Planning:

The report on the draft Skate Strategy is anticipated to be prepared for the Council meeting of 27 July 2020 for consideration of placing on Public Exhibition.

A Councillor workshop briefing on the draft strategy will be part of the public exhibition period and is expected to occur at the Council planning workshop in August.

The following question was submitted by Councillor MacGregor:

Central Coast Council debt levels

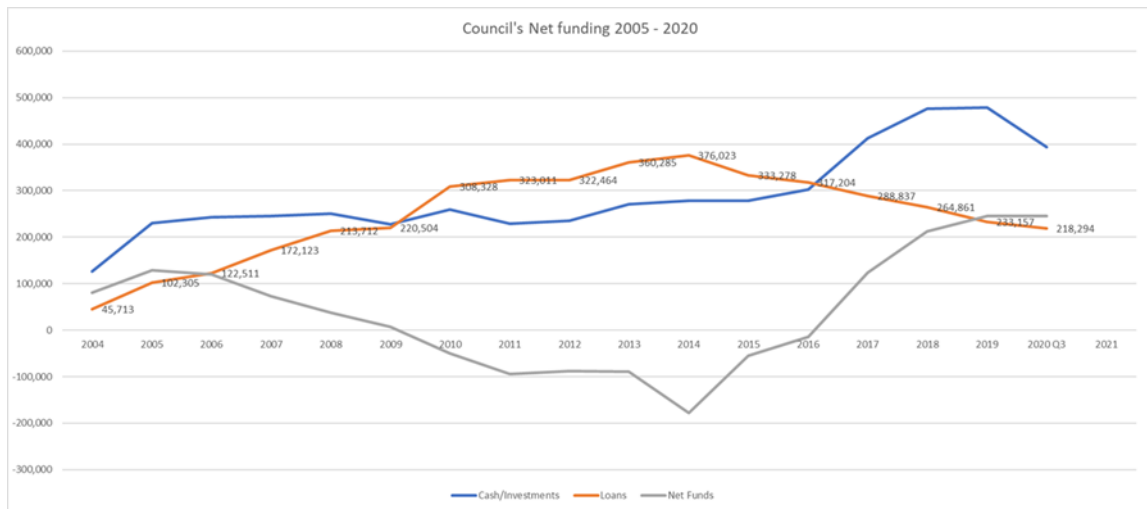
How do Central Coast Councils current debt levels compare to former Gosford and Wyong Council and other comparable amalgamated councils?

Response provided by the Chief Financial Officer:

Please see below a comparison of two other Councils with water authority activities. Comparisons of debt levels with major Councils in the Sydney and Hunter regions are not fair given Water & Sewer services are provided by Sydney Water and Hunter Water respectively. We have provided the debt levels for Councils that do provide Water & Sewer services. Based on the relative size of their ratepayer bases, Central Coast Council has relatively less debt per property at \$1,658.71. Midcoast Council and Shoalhaven Council have by comparison more than double the debt of Central Coast Council on a per property basis at 30 June 2019.

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	Borrowings as at 30 June 2019	Rateable Properties	Borrowings per rateable property	% of CCC
Central Coast Council	233,157,000	140,565	1,658.71	
Midcoast Council	222,574,000	53,397	4,168.29	251%
Shoalhaven Council	222,574,000	56,404	3,946.07	238%
Central Coast Council Highest value (2014FY)	376,023,000	Legacy former Gosford & former Wyong		
	2019	2020 forecast		
Borrowings	233,157,000	236,693,000		
% of peak	62%	63%		



See Attachment 1 for larger image.

The following question was submitted by Councillor McLachlan

North Entrance Beach Erosion

Can Councillors be advised of the start date for dredging of The Entrance Channel, and can council staff advise if the current dredge plan will help assist sand replenishment of the now badly eroded North Entrance Beach, or is there alternative dredge options available to replace the recent storm erosion?

Response provided by Director, Environment and Planning:

The dredging program of The Entrance Channel technically commenced when surveys were commissioned in February 2020. This planning phase of the program is acknowledged in the NSW Governments 'Rescuing Our Waterways' grant funding agreement.

Physical commencement of dredging commenced on 6 April 2020 when staff deployed heavy machinery to relocate sand from the eastern end of The Entrance Channel in order to

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stabilise the southern foreshores of the channel mouth, and to try and preserve the exchange of water between the estuary and the ocean.

Council staff have been working toward a more comprehensive dredging program for The Entrance Channel and have engaged coastal engineering consultants 'Royal Haskoning DHV' (RHDHV) to prepare a dredge plan for The Entrance Channel. Given the most recent changes to the channel and the 'North Entrance Beach', staff have commissioned a revised survey of the area to better inform the dredge plan and understand potential risk to residential building along Hutton Road.

Based on previous instructions from the NSW EPA, future dredging programs are heavily reliant on the presence of the Karagi Sandspit in order to appropriately treat the dredged material, prior to discharge of water to the ocean. With the current absence of any useable land at Karagi Sandspit, a significant obstacle is presented in being able to proceed with a successful dredging program at The Entrance. This has also been acknowledged as a risk in the report Council staff commissioned from GHD "The Entrance Channel Dredging Operations Feasibility Review" This report was recently provided to Council as an accompanying document to the Dredging on the Central Coast considered by Council at the meeting of 27 April 2020.

RHDHV will be asked to consider this issue further in the preparation of the dredge plan. The dredge plan will also consider appropriate locations for placement of dredged material in order to better stabilise foreshores and offset the recent impacts of coastal erosion. Following the recent February Flood Event, Council staff engaged the University of NSW Water Research Laboratory (WRL) to undertake aerial surveys of coastline at The Entrance North in order to gauge sand loss during that event. The survey found that between June 2019 and following the February storm event, 56 m³ of sand per lineal metre of beach was lost. Along the extent of beach between North Entrance Surf Life Saving Club, and the Karagi Park beach access, this equates to an approximate loss of 36,500 cubic metres of sand during that period. Significantly greater amounts of sand have been lost in the May storm event further impacting this location. Volumes will be confirmed following completion of surveys in early June 2020, but are likely to exceed 60,000 cubic metres (volume of beach lost) over this extent since June 2019.

Previous dredging programs undertaken by Council at The Entrance Channel, have yielded 30,000 to 45,000 cubic metres of sand per program. These programs have taken a number of months to both establish and then complete. These programs have also typically been undertaken when large volumes of more accessible sand (i.e. not as deep in the channel) have been available. Again, these have also been at times where conditions have been more appropriate dredging programs to occur, and for dredged material to be better managed at the discharge point. For these reasons, the capacity of a dredging program to adequately replenish sand at 'North Entrance Beach' is limited due to the scale of erosion, volumes available for recovery, and capacity to complete a dredging program in a timely manner.

Alternative sources of sand could be considered for import to the affected section of 'North Entrance Beach'.

Staff are currently reviewing options for 'sand scraping' once ocean conditions subside. This approach would provide for sourcing of sand from within the proximity of the current eroded area. The sand would be sourced from the intertidal zone during low tide events, with sand then appropriately placed within the beach profile to assist with recovery.

Sand supplies from other nearby locations such as Tuggerah Beach at Magenta could also be considered. However approvals would need to be sought from relevant state agencies in regards to procuring the sand, and using it for nourishment purposes at The Entrance North. The works would also still come at considerable cost, but may be able to be undertaken in a more timely manner than a dredging program.

Council should be aware that the sand lost from The Entrance Channel, and the Entrance North foreshores at present is still retained in The Entrance sediment compartment and is likely at some point in the future to be transported back on shore into the Entrance Channel and The Entrance North foreshore areas. Any additional sand brought into this compartment (e.g. from areas such as Magenta) may result in increased total sand volume held within the compartment and may therefore also impact sedimentation patterns in The Entrance Channel over time.

Our coastal zone is dynamic, and managing it is a complex undertaking with decisions needing to be well considered before acting to avoid unintended negative consequences. Council staff are however further investigating current options as discussed above.

The scoping study for the 'Tuggerah Lakes Estuary', and the 'Central Coast Open Coast and Coastal Lagoons' are currently being developed and will support the development of the Coastal Management Program which is required to be completed prior to the end of 2021. The Coastal Management Program will better consider current appropriate options for mitigating impacts associated with coastal erosion here and at other locations on the Central Coast.

Attachment to Clr MacGregor question: Central Coast Council debt levels

1 Council's Net funding 2005-2020 D14011696

