

# Late Report Ordinary Meeting Of Council

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## Wollondilly Shire Council

**Late Report – Monday 20 June 2016**

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GO9 - STORM EVENT AND SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM RECOVERY INITIATIVES

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Late Report to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday, 20 June 2016

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**GO9 – Storm Event and Short Term and Long Term Recovery Initiatives**

**LATE REPORT**

**GO9**

**Storm Event and Short Term and Long Term Recovery Initiatives**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The purpose of this report is to summarise Council's Local Recovery operations that have occurred since the storm event on Sunday 5 June 2016.
- This report is also to inform Council of a proposed project which will explore strategic opportunities for Picton's short-term and long-term renewal, focusing on social, economic and physical (infrastructure) recovery.
- The report also seeks additional budgetary approval for the associated expenditure.

**Recommendations:**

- That Council note the information regarding the Local Recovery Operations.
- That Council approve the commencement of the *Revitalising Picton* project including the proposed expenditure budget and funding source.
- That Council approve the additional expenditure budget and funding source for the Local Recovery Operation clean-up works and urgent infrastructure repairs/replacement.

**REPORT**

**Picton Storm Event Recovery**

On Sunday 5 June 2016 Picton suffered a major storm event which resulted in the Picton Central Business District (primarily Argyle Street) and surrounding areas being inundated with water. This storm event caused extensive damage to businesses and residential homes.

**Local Recovery Operations:**

In the aftermath of the storm event the following Local Recovery Operations have occurred (with some emergency response operations continuing):

- Council Works Crews and Waste Staff cleaned up all roads affected by the storm event to ensure they could re-open.
- Council Works Crews and Waste Staff commenced pickup of storm damaged waste from outside business and residential addresses.
- Fire and Rescue crews completed Critical Impact Assessments on all businesses affected by the storm event.

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- A Local Recovery Committee was formed to Co-ordinate the immediate ongoing Local Recovery operations and manage all aspect of recovery. This Committee continues to regularly meet.
- Council compliance staff and NSW Department of Works engineers have conducted preliminary assessment of buildings affected by the storm event to ensure buildings are safe for entry.
- Council has established a Local Recovery Information Service and 1300 Recovery Hotline for residents and businesses. (This Service operated during the week after the storm from 8am to 8pm weekdays and 10am to 4pm over the long weekend. The Service has now dropped back to regular office hours). The Service has:
  - registered and connected volunteers with those in need
  - provided storm affected residents and businesses information and referrals regarding state and federal agency disaster relief
  - helped those in immediate need through support and counselling
  - dispensed food hamper contributions to those in need
  - helped with housing issues for displaced residents
  - provided advice on clean up and waste removal issues
  - provided immediate financial relief to those in need through the Mayor's Relief Fund
  - included various NSW State Disaster relief services staff
  - provided advice on a wide range of miscellaneous issues arising from the storm event.
- Various major businesses have set up pop-up offices in Council's car park to assist residents.
- The 2016 Storm Event Appeal has been launched and widely promoted. The appeal is administered through the Wollondilly Shire Council Mayor's Relief Fund. Donations are being received and direct financial assistance from the fund has been provided to many families and individuals affected by the storm event. These funds are being distributed to the most in need through a Council criteria and assessment process. All funds disbursed from the Mayor's Relief Fund are going directly to affected members of the community most in need of immediate financial assistance.
- The Storm event recovery assistance from NSW State, Federal agencies and other not for profit organisations has been tremendous including the generous assistance from City of Sydney Council and Camden Council.

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**Current Local Recovery Priorities:**

The Local Recovery Committee has identified the following priorities. Although all elements and tasks required as part of the Local Recovery are important, the following items have been identified as the top priorities:

- Damage assessment of commercial buildings in Picton Town Centre to assess structural adequacy and suitability for continued use.
- Plan and implement arrangements for permanent construction / restoration of damaged and destroyed public infrastructure at Broughton Pass – Wilton Road, Wilton.
- Design and implement arrangements for the welfare of the community and Council staff including Post Disaster Counselling Assistance and assistance via NSW State Government Disaster Grants and the Wollondilly Shire Council Mayor's Relief Fund.
- Design and implement re-establishment of economic activity in the Central Business Area of Picton.

***Revitalising Picton – Short Term and Long Term Revitalisation Project***

In the wake of this devastating storm event, Council will bring stakeholders together to explore opportunities for Picton's short-term and long-term renewal. The aim of this collaborative project will be to identify strategies and options to "future-proof" Picton, focusing on social, economic and physical (infrastructure) recovery and resilience.

Other Australian towns have undertaken similar post-disaster recovery and rebuilding plans – Gympie, Lismore, and Ipswich for example.

*Revitalising Picton* would consider or include a range of infrastructure, social and economic development issues within a short time-frame with a strong focus on re-establishing a thriving business centre.

This process will be managed by a small team comprising the General Manager, Economic Development Manager, Manager Development and seconding other assistance for specific elements such as engineering where required and also supported by a specialist consultant that we expect to engage this week.

**CONSULTATION**

As noted above, *Revitalising Picton* would aim to be focussed, concise and consultative, involving key stakeholders and agencies.

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**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Reg 211(1) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 requires expenditure to be approved and funds to be voted by Council before incurring a liability. Generally, expenditure approval is given as part of the adoption of the annual budget within the Operational Plan or subsequently at one of the Quarterly Budget Reviews. It is also permissible under Reg 211(1) to grant this approval at any Council meeting.

Given the urgent nature of the *Revitalising Picton* project, it is recommended that it progress immediately and in accordance with Reg 211(1) approval is sought for expenditure to be incurred for the purpose of developing and delivering this project. Due to the immediacy of this project, the scope of work to be undertaken is yet to be fully identified and therefore cost estimates are not currently able to be determined.

To enable the project to commence, it is proposed that an initial expenditure budget of \$50,000 be approved which will allow the project to commence, including consultation and scoping. The consultation and scoping will assist in determining likely cost estimates and any necessary budget adjustments will be put to Council in the upcoming Quarterly Budget Review.

The Local Recovery Operations also require budget approval for the expenditure associated with the clean-up works and urgent infrastructure repairs/replacement. It is proposed that an initial expenditure budget of \$200,000 be allocated for the clean-up costs and rectification works, with the budget spread over two financial years (due to the works being required during June and July). Accordingly, it is proposed that \$100,000 of this allocation be approved as additional expenditure in 2015/16 budget year and a further \$100,000 expenditure be approved for 2016/17 in addition to the annual budget adopted in the earlier report to this Council meeting. Any further budget adjustments that may subsequently be required will be put to Council in the upcoming Quarterly Budget Review, including any associated funding that may be forthcoming from external agencies.

It is also proposed that the expenditure for the *Revitalising Picton* project and the Local Recovery Operation clean-up works and infrastructure repairs/replacement be funded from Council's internally restricted cash.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

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**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council note the information regarding the Local Recovery Operations.
2. That Council approve the commencement of the *Revitalising Picton* project.
3. That an expenditure budget of \$100,000 be approved in the 2015/16 budget for the Local Recovery Operation clean-up works and urgent infrastructure repairs/replacement with funding provided from Council's internally restricted cash.
4. That an expenditure budget of \$100,000 for the Local Recovery Operation clean-up works and urgent infrastructure repairs/replacement be approved for 2016/17 in addition to the annual budget adopted in this meeting in report G08, with funding provided from Council's internally restricted cash.
5. That an expenditure budget of \$50,000 for the Revitalising Picton project be approved for 2016/17 in addition to the annual budget adopted in this meeting in report G08, with funding provided from Council's internally restricted cash.