

MAYORAL MINUTE

A. Meetings

Meetings attended since my last report include:

1. Care Car Committee Meeting 13 February 2009.
2. Meeting with local builders 13 February 2009.
3. Council Meeting 17 February 2009.
4. Meeting with Aged Care Committee re Aged Care Survey 19 February 2009.
5. Special Council Meeting 24 February 2009.
6. Economic Development Unit Meeting 25 February 2009.
7. Centroc Board Meeting, Young 26 February 2009.
8. Water Reform Meeting, Lithgow 27 February 2009.
9. Sustainability Conference Sydney 6 March 2009.
10. Works Committee Meeting 9 March 2009.
11. LGSA Tourism Conference 10 – 12 March 2009.

B. Representation

Council was represented at the following:

1. Oberon Miss Show Girl Dinner 13 February 2009.
2. Community BBQ at the Common for Oberon & Villages Sumer Festival – 20 February 2009.
3. Official opening of the Oberon Show 21 February 2009.
4. Oberon High School Assembly 2 March 2009.

C. Correspondence

Correspondence received included:

1. From Minister Phillip Costa MP regarding the \$85 million “Building the Country package.

D. Other – Council Provision of Social Infrastructure

Consideration of the need for the establishment of major community infrastructure has been ongoing for some time. This includes:

- Aged care
- Multi purpose sports centre
- Covering the pool
- Expansion of the library
- Multi purpose community centre.

OBERON COUNCIL
Page 2 of 4

Action has been implemented to facilitate and expedite the aged care facility by securing the land. The funds required being \$80000 with a further \$320,000 if the Council does not on-sell the project to an operator within a specified time frame. The key issue for this to occur is adequate bed licenses.

Plans have been developed for the multi purpose sports centre with a cost estimate to provide the facilities requested being \$4.3 million.

In addition, the enclosing of the swimming pool will require a further \$1.4 million. As studies indicate that a stand alone pool operating on an annual basis would not be economically viable. It has been included as an integration component with the multi purpose sports centre.

An application has or will be made for \$5.75 million under the Federal Government's Economic Assistance Scheme.

The multi purpose community centre has reached the final design stage with a recommendation from the committee to adopt option 2. This option provides for the demolition of the existing community centre and the dental surgery. It is proposed that the dental surgery be relocated into the adjoining house which was purchased to provide expansion of the Council precinct if required. The capital costs of this project being

• Construction of new multi purpose centre building	\$2,818,000
• Provision of the adjoining house for the dental surgery	\$ 240,000
• The value of the existing centre and dental buildings	<u>\$ 299,000</u>
TOTAL	\$3,357,000

On the assumption that the Council will accept the proposal, funding of \$2,818,000 would have to be identified to enable it to proceed.

One of the objectives of integrating the MPCC with the library was that it would enable access to integrated project funding. It is understood that library grants of this nature are limited to \$200,000.

The capital cost per head of these projects based on the population and ratable properties would be:

Project	Value of project	Cost per head of population	Cost per rate payer
MPSC	\$4,323,000	\$859	\$1,271
Pool enclosure	\$1,428,000	\$284	\$420
Library expansion and MPCC	\$3,357,000	\$667	\$987
TOTAL	\$9,108,000	\$1,810	\$2,678

The aged care project has not been included as it is assumed that it will be on-sold.

The question of funding of these projects needs to be identified.

Assuming that the grant for the multi purpose sports centre is successful, then it is suggested that based on our population that we will be unlikely in the foreseeable future to obtain a further grant for the multi purpose community centre. This may not be correct but needs to be considered as a possibility.

The situation would be the same if the grant was obtained for the MPCC before the MPSC.

There is no doubt that the Council needs to progress the establishment of new or improved community facilities, the aged care action to secure a new nursing home being the top priority. Also, if we are to retain the existing and encourage further young families to live in Oberon improved activities for children on an all year basis is required. If this does not occur, we will not be able to sustain or achieve the required population critical mass that would ensure adequate future services being provided to the community.

There is also the need in the near, if not the immediate, future to address library and other cultural needs of the community.

It is suggested that it is therefore not appropriate for Council to just rely on grants. If we get them, great! But what if we don't?

If there is agreement, the Council needs to consider alternative courses of funding options together with consideration of possible alternative means of providing in some form the social infrastructure for the community.

The basis of the suggestion being that it would appear that unless a grant can be obtained in total for the MPSC/Swimming pool enclosure, the proposal as it currently stands would not be within the Council's resources. The same applies to the MPCC.

The action required is suggested to be:

1. Obtain details of all possible grants and the contribution required by Council to be successful.
2. Assess the available funding by Council from existing and future finances.
3. The feasibility of loans and possible contribution required of the community.
4. The feasibility of scaling down the projects to make them more affordable. For example, we should ensure that the library can be expanded as required without it being held up awaiting a grant for the total MPCC project. E.g., perhaps this could be done by amending the plans so that it can be developed in stages.
5. Alternative options for providing these facilities.

If it is agreed that this action was appropriate then a time frame should be set for completion.

I would also like to suggest that the staff need some increased assistance in preparing grant applications. The Council currently shares the services of a grants officer with Lithgow and Mudgee. Although the grants officer makes a significant contribution the benefit is currently limited to about 4 hours per week.

This means that the responsibility for preparing grants falls on the senior staff who are currently overcommitted for time.

It is recommended that Council:

- Consider items 1 to 5.
- Evaluate possible infrastructure required in the other village areas.
- Consider the provision of additional assistance with grant applications.
- Set an additional meeting date to discuss the issues as soon as possible, recognising the time required by staff to gather the necessary background information.

Keith Sullivan
Mayor