

**PUBLIC FORUM
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS
14 March 2018**



Questions – Sue Ball-Guymer

Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub

The stated justification for the \$11m contribution from the sewer funds towards the Headquarters Project is that staff occupying the building will be working on sewer and water related activities.

You have previously stated that water and sewer staff work on all related assets across the whole LGA (Public Forum 24 January 2018 Question 6).

You have also stated that the \$11m would be drawn from the Queanbeyan water and sewer funds (Public Forum 24 January Question 1).

1. Given these three statements why is the \$11m only being drawn from the Queanbeyan funds and not the Palerang funds?

Response - CEO

In regards to questions 1-5, councillors will be presented with further information at a workshop on 14 March and a subsequent report will be presented to a Council meeting in the coming weeks. The below responses are subject to change based on the outcome of the workshop and Council meeting.

The Bungendore and Braidwood offices are appropriate for the operations conducted from those sites. It is the Queanbeyan site that requires a new office to accommodate the 200 staff operating from 11 different buildings in the CBD. Accordingly, it is the Queanbeyan water and sewer funds that are proposed to contribute toward the new Queanbeyan office. While those Funds have reserves that may contribute, the General Fund does not – hence it is proposed to borrow funds for that Fund's share.

You have stated that a total of 66 staff are involved in water, sewer and waste activities, some of whom are based in depots and some are office-based (Public Forum 24 January 2018 – Question 5).

2. How many of these 66 staff are office-based?

Response – Community Connections

As previously stated, staff are directly and indirectly involved in the provision of water and sewer functions. There are eight salaried staff positions within the Utilities Branch. All of these are office-based. Some field staff also have a partial presence in offices.

3. How many of these office-based staff are located in Queanbeyan?

Response – Community Connections

Currently, four of these Utilities Branch salaried positions are located in Queanbeyan.

You have outlined the requirements of the NSW Office and Water and NSW Government regarding the operation of the water and sewer funds, including the need to establish a long-term financial plan for the utility and to provide a return on assets report. (Public Forum 24 January – Question 7). You have also stated that there will be no return on the \$11m contribution being made to the Headquarters Project (Public Forum 24 January 2018 – Question 2).

4. How does stripping the Queanbeyan funds of \$11m assist in the long term financial viability of the funds particularly in view of the need for a new STP?

Response - CEO

The Queanbeyan STP project has been estimated at over \$100m to develop, comprising a mix of grants, debt and reserves to finance the project. Financial forecasts have projected adequate levels of reserves will be available for capital projects from those held now, and to be transferred to reserve over coming years – even allowing for the proposal to assign some of those reserves towards the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub.

5. Why is the \$11m being dealt with as a ‘contribution’ rather than a loan with no return being made to the funds?

Response - CEO

The option to utilise reserves as an internal loan from those Funds, in lieu of a contribution, or to augment external borrowings has been considered and may still be pursued when Council considers updated scale and site proposals for the Head Office. That approach would be consistent with previous purchases of CBD buildings by those Funds.

Questions – Katrina Willis

South Jerrabomberra development

6. Can the council confirm that as consequence of reducing the number of dwellings, the developers of South Jerrabomberra will no longer be required to construct a road linking the development to the ACT, as reported in the *Queanbeyan Age* online on 6 March 2018?

Response – Community Connections

Council can confirm that the developers of South Tralee are not required to construct a link road to the ACT.

7. If this is the case, what are the implications for traffic planning in QPRC local government area specifically:
- Will the council need to revise its preferred alignment for Dunns Creek Rd?
 - Will this entail a longer route requiring substantially more earthworks than building along the preferred alignment?
 - Will this increase the cost of Dunns Creek Rd?
 - Will this prompt the council to reschedule the anticipated earliest commencement date for Dunns Creek Rd (currently 2041)?
 - Will the Council need to review traffic modeling for the proposed new connection of South Jerrabomberra to Tomsitt Drive?
 - What other implications are there for the wider traffic network?

Response – Community Connections

Council has published information on the Dunns Creek Rd project page on its website at <https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Major-Works-Projects/Dunns-Creek-Road>

This page contains links to the Dunns Creek Road alignment investigation and cost review which was reviewed by Council at its 23 September 2015 meeting. This document reviews all possible alignments for the proposed road. Council has no intention of reviewing its preferred alignment, nor rescheduling the timing for the proposed Dunns Creek Rd construction.

The Tralee developer is required to maintain road reserve for Council's preferred alignment through its development. Council's traffic model has demonstrated that the road network performs to a satisfactory level with the proposed South Jerrabomberra Development.

Waste management

8. Can the council provide an update on the proposal to prepare a new waste management strategy for the Queanbeyan-Palerang LGA?

Response – Community Connections

Council sought quotes for the preparation of the strategy from 2 February-2 March. Staff are reviewing the responses.

9. What is the current timeline?

Response – Community Connections

The timeline will be confirmed when the consultant is appointed, however it is the intention to have this body of work completed and adopted by Council by the end of this calendar year.

10. How does the council intend to involve the community, including local business operators, in the development of the new waste management strategy?

Response – Community Connections

This will be further defined when a successful consultant is appointed, however the request for quotation identified two rounds of community consultation.

As a general guide, the first consultation will be an information gathering exercise and is expected to collect community feedback on a number of facets of our current waste management processes and services. This information will be used to develop the draft Strategy.

The second consultation will be based on the draft Strategy and will gauge the community response to the draft Strategy

A report is being prepared for an upcoming Council meeting which will recommend the establishment of a Waste Strategy Working Group. The make-up of the Group will be determined by Council. Once the make-up of the group is determined, expressions of interest will be sought from the respective groups to select members.

11. Can the council advise whether it has sought funding under any government program to assist with recycling in the LGA?

Response – Community Connections

Council is completing construction of a Community Recycling Centre at the Queanbeyan Waste Minimisation Centre (WAMI) using funding provided by the NSW Government through the Waste Less, Recycle More Grant Program. This facility will allow Queanbeyan residents to dispose of low-toxicity chemicals safely. Materials left by residents will be collected by NSW Government contractors for recycling or disposal if unsuited to recycling. This facility is similar to that operating at Bungendore for several years.

Council has also utilised grant funding to introduce greenwaste collections in the former Palerang Local Government Area, construct a Community Recycling Centre at Bungendore, assist in the final closure of Macs Reef Landfill (to commence shortly) and a number of litter reduction programmes such as the installation of bins around Lake Jerrabomberra.

12. If so, what was the outcome of any application for funding?

Response – Community Connections

See question 11.

13. Is the council aware of any changes to the destination of recycled materials collected in the LGA as a consequence of the recent decision of the Chinese Government to stop accepting imports of recycled materials?

Response – Community Connections

No. Council kerbside recycled materials are taken to the Hume Materials Recycling Facility. This facility has not advised us of any changes in material destinations. Council will await further guidance from the facility.

CBD land sales – heads of agreement

- 14. Can the council advise whether it has negotiated the sale of any properties in the Queanbeyan CBD that form part of the heads of agreement with the Downtown Q consortium? If so, please provide details.**

Response - CEO

No contracts for sale have been negotiated at this stage.

- 15. Has the sale of properties along Crawford St and Collett St been delayed because of the loss of the NSW Police as a tenant in the proposed QPRC headquarters?**

Response - CEO

No, the potential sale of those sites are subject to different staging under the Heads of Agreement, and are unrelated to the Queanbeyan Head Office and Smart Hub development.

- 16. Has the council discussed the option of selling the library site to the Downtown Q consortium given the proposal to build a new library in the CBD?**

Response - CEO

This is not being contemplated.

- 17. If not, what is the plan for the future use of the current Queanbeyan library?**

Response - CEO

See question 16.