



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

MAYORAL REPORT

9th May 2006

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MEETINGS IN SYDNEY

FILE: 264

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{ Folio No. * }

SUMMARY:

To inform Council of progress in the Resource Sharing initiatives around the State and our application for a Special Rate increase.



DESCRIPTION:

The General Manager and I attended the Strategic Alliance Network Conference in Sydney on the 1 May 2006. The conference was organised by both the Department of Local Government and the Local Government and Shires Associations.

Minister Hickey again reiterated that there would be no forced amalgamations of Council but that he and the Department had a high expectation that Councils co-operate and resource share to overcome individual Council financial difficulties and to generate efficiencies and increased service levels.

There were presentations from: -

- The New England Strategic Alliance
- The IT Joint Venture – Councils on Line
- Local Government and Shires Associations Facilitating Partnerships
- Shore Link Library Information Systems
- Mid North Coast Group of Council's Strategic Alliance
- Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils – Developing Intellectual Property
- Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils – Waste Contract and Street Lighting
- Mosman / Glen Innes Friendship Communities
- Road Transit Authority Road Maintenance Clustering
- Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils – e-Tendering

It is obvious that Resource Sharing is being practiced by a lot of Councils around the State. There are varying modes such as

Alliance Agreements, Shared Services models, Regional Organisations of Councils and Service Contracting. There was a debate as to whether country Councils could be a resource sharing model.

The Conference was attended by approximately 180 delegates and all Councils on the Mid North Coast were represented.

On Tuesday the General Manager and I met with the Minister for Local Government, The Deputy Director of The Department of Local Government Ross Woodward and the Ministers Chief of Staff, Michael Galderisi to discuss our application for a Special Rate increase.

Apparently he has received thirty-four applications from Councils, many of which were of poor quality and will be rejected. Our submission was not a poor quality submission. He was pleased with our debt service ratio and is in fact requiring Councils with low debt service ratios to borrow as an alternative to a Special Rate increase. He expressed concern that the Special Rate increase was for maintenance rather than construction but understood our reasoning. He agreed to give our application due consideration and Council should expect a decision by mid June.

The Minister will be doing a Regional tour early in the financial year and will be visiting Kempsey. I offered to arrange a MIDGOC meeting in Kempsey while he is here to maximise his visit.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

Nil

- ***Social***

Nil

- ***Economic (Financial)***

Nil

- ***Policy or Statutory***

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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J A C Hayes
MAYOR