



MAYORAL REPORT - SUPPLEMENTARY

16th January 2007

MM7	MEETING WITH CSIRO
SUPP.	FILE: 949 EAG {Folio No. *}

SUMMARY:

Reporting on meeting with CSIRO, Area Consultative Committee and Regional Development representatives held 15th December 2006.

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BACKGROUND:

Council at its meeting of 10th October 2007 agreed to:-

- support a proposal to become part of the Sustainable Communities programme, partnering with the CSIRO (and others identified by the latter).
- that we apply to become part of the project with the allocation of funding for the first three payments of our contribution of the project.
- that we would invite the CSIRO to make a presentation to council hence the meeting which is the subject of this report.

Communications between Council and the community, and within the community generally, has been identified as an area of concern.

One of Council's communications strategies, which has been endorsed by Council, is the development of focus groups as a strategy to address our perceived communications concerns.

DESCRIPTION:

Councillors Bowell, Hayes, Hunt, McWilliams, Saul, Walker and myself, Directors Pitt, Snape and Vermeulen, Senior staff Kathy Oliver, Megan Barber, Margaret Mottee, and Mr. B. Irvine (MDAP) met with representatives from the CSIRO, Area Consultative Committee, Regional Develop Board(Federal) State Regional Development Board and Premiers Department, to further our possible involvement in the Sustainable Communities initiative.

Presentations were made by Sean Rooney and Dan Walker from the CSIRO which:-

- outlined the objectives of the programme and the CSIRO's experience with the programme in other areas across the country.
- The positive social and economic benefits achieved by community engagement.

The project is community focus and engagement.

During discussions the CSIRO officers pointed out that proceeding with the project would involve commitment by Council and ongoing participation by all partners. (Some of who are yet to be identified).

The project has tentatively been called Macleay Options, Values and Enterprise project (MOVE) and is to develop our capacity to be opportunity ready when future funding and business developments occur.

CSIRO will bring in people experienced in the area of community engagement to undertake initial research as to where we as a community are at. CSIRO have committed \$100,000, Council has already committed \$52,500 (\$3500 per month for 15 months) with a current submission for \$150,000 to the Federal government under the Sustainable Regions Programme. CSIRO are already canvassing private enterprise partners to become involved in the project.

The proposed project (with the CSIRO) will provide the resources and expertise to progress Council's objective to address its communication with the community concerns.

The opportunity which this project presents us with is to further the community involvement in the development of our strategic plan coming at the time of our present review of the long term corporate plan.

There was general discussion of issues including the system/s of progress including brokerage, commitment, size of shire and spread of committee/s, development of special interest groups (focus), different pathways to achieve our objectives and cultural change which will develop from this project. This is in essence a community development (capacity building) project. It is a way to inform and engage with our community.

A funding application is being prepared for submission to DOTARS for funding.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental:***

May be some long term environmental effects depending on future projects which may arise from this proposal

- ***Social:***

Community engagement and sustainable communications strategies will improve the social well being of our shire.

- *Economic (Financial):*

While an initial financial contribution is required there are other fund holders who will be involved. By becoming opportunity ready then future resource availability will occur which will increase our economic wellbeing.

Council resolved at its 10th October 2006 meeting to allocate \$10,500 in 2006 / 07 Budget (from sale of scrap metal if available) with a further \$42,000 to be listed for consideration in the 2007 / 08 Budget.

- *Policy or Statutory:*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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E A Green
MAYOR