



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

To be held at 5pm on

Tuesday 15 November 2022

Council Chambers

11 Manning Street, KIAMA NSW 2533

Members

Mayor

Councillor N Reilly

Deputy Mayor

Councillor I Draisma

Councillor M Brown

Councillor M Croxford

Councillor J Keast

Councillor S Larkins

Councillor K Renkema-Lang

Councillor K Rice

Councillor W Steel

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16 ADDENDUM TO REPORTS

16.1 Financial quarterly budget review - quarter ending September 2022

CSP Objective: Outcome 12: Public funds and assets are managed strategically, transparently and efficiently

CSP Strategy: 12.1 Manage Public Funds in accordance with Financial Management Standards and the Local Government Act

Delivery Program: 12.1.1 Improved financial reporting and legislative compliance through reporting, scrutiny and oversight processes.

Summary

This report presents the September quarterly Operational Plan (budget) review for the 2022/23 financial year in accordance with Part 9, Division 3, Clause 203 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. The report details the recommended changes to the revised budgets for the period ending 30 September 2022.

Financial implication

Variation to Council's 2022/2023 Budget.

Risk implication

The risk implication attached to this information is not meeting legislative requirements.

Policy

This report is a requirement under the Local Government Act 1993.

Consultation (internal)

Chief Financial Officer

Finance Team

Chief Operating Officer

Communication/Community engagement

N/A

Attachments

1 2022-23 quarterly budget review for the period ending 30/09/2022 [↓](#)

Enclosures



Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and adopt the quarterly budget review for the quarter ending 30 September 2022.

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

16.1 Financial quarterly budget review - quarter ending September 2022 (cont)

<p>KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW For the Period Ending 30 September 2022</p> <p>Responsible Accounting Officer Statement</p> <p>The following statement is made in accordance with Clause 203(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005: 30 September 2022</p> <p>It is my opinion that the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for Kiama Municipal Council for the quarter ended 30/09/22 indicates that Council's projected financial position at 30/06/23 will be satisfactory at year end, having regard to the projected estimates of income and expenditure and the original budgeted income and expenditure.</p> <p><i>Signed:</i> </p> <p>10/11/2022</p> <p>Joe Gaudiosi Chief Operating Officer - Responsible accounting officer</p>	
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Item 16.1

OverviewOperating

The attached quarterly budget review (QBR) for the quarter ended September 2022 (QBR1) shows an increase to the operating budget of \$1.617M taking the original budget surplus of \$2.741M up to \$4.358M. Note this result is net of capital grants of \$5.867M which when added show a bigger result of \$10.225M but clearly these grant funds require commensurate capital expenditure through the balance sheet.

The QBR process is an important process for Kiama Municipal Council (KMC) and all organisations in terms of keeping abreast of forecasting annual operating results. Additionally, for KMC and all local councils, it is a legislative requirement. KMC's Finance Team has experienced significant challenges over the past 6-12 months and this QBR is evidence of progress in terms of development and improvement. This first QBR1 however can be further refined and improved in upcoming QBR processes.

The revised operating budget aligns reasonably well with YTD September progress in terms of 76% revenue and 73% expenditure allocation.

Notes and commentary to support the revenue of \$860K and expense of \$2.149M adjustments are provided in the operational quarterly budget review table.

Note the column titled "QBR1 Internal Allocation" in the operational quarterly budget review reflects internal budget allocation adjustments noted in recent months where budgets have been incorrectly assigned to the incorrect natural account code. Importantly this nets to "Nil" but is shown here as it is a budget adjustment nonetheless.

Capital

The capital budget of \$20.487M (including carry forward from prior year) has been decreased by \$5.308M to \$15.179M. This is in line with capital works reductions noted

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

16.1 Financial quarterly budget review - quarter ending September 2022 (cont)

in Council business papers related to cash flow forecasts and related cash flow concerns.

Expenditure to year-to-date September 2022 shows that 97% of the revised budget remains for the balance of 2023. This would indicate that there may be further adjustments in upcoming QBR processes but at this stage, the reduction of \$5.308M has been reflected.

Item 16.1



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
OPERATIONAL QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW
For the Period Ending 30 September 2022

	Adopted Budget 2023 \$'000	Carry Forwards \$'000	Approved Changes			Revised Budget 2023 \$'000	QBR 1 Allocation		QBR 1 Adjustment \$'000	Notes	Projected Year End Budget 2023 \$'000	Actual YTD to Sep 22 Figures 2023 \$'000	Remaining Budget %
			Other than by QBRs \$'000	Sep QBRs \$'000	Dec QBRs \$'000		Mar QBRs \$'000	Adjustment \$'000					
Income from continuing operations													
Rates and annual charges	26,999	-	-	-	26,999	220					27,219	6,178	77%
User charges and fees	25,433	-	-	-	25,433	1,701	(192)		1,529		26,942	7,218	73%
Other revenue	4,324	-	-	-	4,324	1,980	(350)		3,514		6,304	2,479	61%
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	16,717	-	-	-	16,717	(3,998)	(350)		3,514		12,468	3,683	70%
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	6,196	-	-	-	6,196	-	(329)		10		5,867	762	87%
Interest and investment income	741	-	-	-	741	-	11		2		752	188	75%
Other income	6,279	-	-	-	6,279	-	-		-		6,279	268	96%
Total income from continuing operations	86,689	-	-	-	86,689	3	(860)				85,831	20,775	76%
Expenses from continuing operations													
Employee benefits and on-costs	38,340	-	-	-	38,340	(34)	(1,290)		28		37,016	9,119	76%
Materials and services	39,607	-	-	-	39,607	(1,456)	(632)		4,6,6,15,18,20,22		37,519	7,518	80%
Borrowing costs	1,827	-	-	-	1,827	-	(226)		21		1,601	398	78%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment for non financial assets	11,186	-	-	-	11,186	-	-		-		11,186	2,797	75%
Other expenses	1,202	-	-	-	1,202	1,493	-		-		2,695	656	76%
Net loss from the disposal of assets	(14,410)	-	-	-	(14,410)	-	-		-		(14,410)	(25)	100%
Total Expenses from continuing operations	77,752	-	-	-	77,752	3	(2,149)				75,607	20,463	73%
Operating result from continuing operations	8,936	-	-	-	8,936	0	1,288				10,225	312	97%
Net operating results for the year	8,936	-	-	-	8,936	0	1,288				10,225	312	97%
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	2,741	-	-	-	2,741	0	1,617				4,358	(449)	

KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
OPERATIONAL QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW
For the Period Ending 30 September 2022



Recommended changes to revised budget

<u>Notes</u>	<u>Details</u>	
User charges and fees		
1	Decrease in revenue budget due to occupancy rate of the residential aged care facility being reduced from 99% to 90%	(417,786)
12	Reduction of Rental Income budget due to duplications	(56,396)
19	Revised revenue budget amount for bin charges at reserves	282,000
	Total User charges and fees	(192,182)
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes		
3	Removal of budget for the Business Improvement Fund Grant for the Blue Haven Aged Care Facility as funding was not awarded	(500,000)
5	Decrease in Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) grant revenue budget due to reduction in the occupancy rate budget as per Note 1	(853,883)
11	Creation of budget for revenue relating to sand mining	10,000
13	Reduction of Grant budget for Target Early Intervention (TEI) based on funding granted	(6,384)
14	Creation of budget for unexpected grant revenue relating to a Storm Event from NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPIE)	1,000,000
	Total Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	(350,267)
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes		
10	Reduction of Developer Contribution revenue budget due to duplications	(329,000)
	Total Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	(329,000)
Interest and investment income		
2	Adjustment to interest on investments budget due to higher than expected interest rates	11,080
	Total Interest and investment income	11,080
Employee benefits and on-costs		
7	Reduction of employee cost budget relating to council department restructure for quarter 1	(500,000)
8	Reduction of wage budget relating to cost centre duplications	(790,420)
	Total Employee benefits and on-costs	(1,290,420)

Operational Variation Details

1 of 3

Materials and services		
4	Removal of budget for expenditure relating to Business Improvement Fund grant no longer awarded	(500,000)
6	Creation of budget for OLG financial advisor costs in line with performance improvement order	250,000
9	Creation of consultant budget for OSSM inspections previously not budgeted for	20,000
15	Increase in budget for underestimated bank fees	126,600
16	Increase in budget for legal cost due to additional legal advice and requirements	265,000
17	Increase in budget for uninsured/under excess property loss claims	80,000
18	Creation of budget for annual subscription for LG Professionals	41,000
20	Revised budget of Technology One Implementation due to delays	(195,000)
22	Percentage reduction in overall materials and contracts budgets across various departments due to present circumstances	-
	Total Materials and services	(632,311)
Borrowing costs		
21	Removal of borrowing costs no longer necessary	(226,000)
	Total Borrowing costs	(226,000)
	Total Revenue Adjustments	(860,369)
	Total Expenditure Adjustments	(2,148,731)

Operational Variation Details

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KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
CAPITAL QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW
For the Period Ending 30 September 2022



	Adopted Budget 2023 \$'000			Carry Forwards \$'000			Revised Budget 2023 \$'000			QBR 1 Adjustment \$'000		Notes	Projected Year End Budget 2023 \$'000		Actual YTD to Sep 22 Figures \$'000	Remaining Budget %
	2023 \$'000	Other than by O&B \$'000	Approved Changes	2023 \$'000	Dec O&B \$'000	Mar O&B \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2023 \$'000						
New Assets																
Blue Haven Buildings & Facilities	808	-	-	-	-	-	808	(100)	4	708	-	-	-	-	100%	
Carparks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Commercial - Holiday Parks	25	-	-	-	-	-	25	(265)	31.38, 36.39	2,240	34	9	-	-	100%	
Commercial Business	2,233	272	-	-	-	-	2,505	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	98%	
Footpaths & cycleways	100	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	91%	
ICT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Plant & Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Waste Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Playgrounds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Recreation and Open Space	2,355	122	-	-	-	-	2,477	(350)	83.93	2,009	31	-	-	-	100%	
Roads and Bridges	160	-	-	-	-	-	160	-	-	160	-	-	-	-	100%	
Stormwater Assets	165	-	-	-	-	-	165	(165)	68.72	-	-	-	-	-	100%	
Traffic Facilities	150	-	-	-	-	-	150	59	77.78	-	-	-	-	-	100%	
Total new assets	5,996	394	-	-	-	-	6,390	(471)		5,919	44	-	-	-	99%	
Renewal assets (Replacement)																
Blue Haven Buildings & Facilities	690	-	-	-	-	-	690	(350)	1.33	340	31	-	-	-	91%	
Carparks	1,790	21	-	-	-	-	1,791	(980)	5.19	801	-	-	-	-	100%	
Commercial - Holiday Parks	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	
Commercial Business	2,984	-	-	-	-	-	2,984	(1,290)	11.21	1,694	64	-	-	-	95%	
Commercial Business	175	315	-	-	-	-	490	(466)	13.32, 15	24	2	-	-	-	100%	
Footpaths & cycleways	450	-	-	-	-	-	450	(466)	96	16	-	-	-	-	113%	
ICT	750	-	-	-	-	-	750	(690)	83.93	660	41	-	-	-	94%	
Plant & Equipment	2,361	-	-	-	-	-	2,361	(901)	78	1,460	83	-	-	-	94%	
Waste Services	125	271	-	-	-	-	396	(125)	84.86	271	1	-	-	-	45%	
Playgrounds	220	-	-	-	-	-	220	(100)	78	120	66	-	-	-	100%	
Recreation and Open Space	1,351	330	-	-	-	-	1,681	(301)	46.47	1,380	28	-	-	-	98%	
Roads and Bridges	1,840	-	-	-	-	-	1,840	(370)	69.73	1,470	94	-	-	-	94%	
Stormwater Assets	425	-	-	-	-	-	425	-	-	560	1	-	-	-	100%	
Traffic Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total renewal assets	13,160	937	-	-	-	-	14,097	(4,837)		9,260	411	-	-	-	96%	
Total capital expenditure	19,157	1,331	-	-	-	-	20,487	(5,308)		15,179	455	-	-	-	97%	
Capital Funding																
Rates & other united funding:																
General Revenue	5,262	26	-	-	-	-	5,287	(2,806)	(7)	2,481	-	-	-	-	100%	
Stormwater Levy Revenue	227	-	-	-	-	-	227	(77)	-	150	146	-	-	-	3%	
Capital grants & contributions:																
Grant Revenue	6,680	990	-	-	-	-	7,670	454	-	8,124	-	-	-	-	100%	
Reserves:																
- External restrictions/reserves:	690	-	-	-	-	-	690	(350)	-	340	-	-	-	-	100%	
Blue Haven Reserve	2,984	315	-	-	-	-	3,299	(1,290)	(34)	2,009	31	-	-	-	98%	
Crown Land Reserve	1,289	-	-	-	-	-	1,289	(745)	-	544	87	-	-	-	88%	
Section 71.1 Developer Contributions Reserve	1,125	-	-	-	-	-	1,125	(595)	-	530	-	-	-	-	100%	
Section 71.1 Developer Contributions Reserve	750	-	-	-	-	-	750	(100)	-	650	83	-	-	-	87%	
Plant Replacement Reserve	150	-	-	-	-	-	150	-	-	150	-	-	-	-	100%	
Land Development Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Loans:																
Receipts from sale of assets:																
- Plant & equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
- Land & buildings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total capital funding	19,157	1,331	-	-	-	-	20,487	(5,308)		15,179	455	-	-	-	97%	
Net capital funding - surplus/(deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	

KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
CAPITAL QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW
For the Period Ending 30 September 2022



Recommended changes to revised budget		Amount	Total Per Program
Notes	Details		
	Blue Haven:		
1	BH Havillah Decommissioning	Reduction in program (20,000)	
2	ILU replacement program - BH Terralong	Reduction in program (280,000)	
3	ILU replacement program - BH Bonaira	Reduction in program (50,000)	(350,000)
	Buildings & Facilities:		
4	Gerroa Boat Ramp (Ricketts Reserve) Amenities	Reduction in program (100,000)	
5	Works Depot Review and Masterplan	Reduction in program (100,000)	
6	Council Buildings upgrade & renewal program (Annual allocation)	Reduction in program (450,000)	
7	Jamberoo School Of Arts - Accessible Toilet	Reduction in program (15,000)	
8	North Bombo Amenities - SRV Project	Reduction in program (300,000)	
9	Visitor Info Centre windows refurb	Reduction in program (15,000)	
10	Council Admin Building renewal / office space redesign	Reduction in program (100,000)	(1,080,000)
	Commercial - Holiday Parks:		
11	Seven Mile HP - General HP Assets renewal	Reduction in program (50,000)	
12	Surf Beach HP - general cabin renewal	Reduction in program (25,000)	

Capital Variation Details

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13	Surf Beach HP - General HP Assets renewal	Reduction in program	(10,000)
14	Seven Mile HP - general cabin renewal	Reduction in program	(40,000)
15	Werri Beach HP - general cabin renewal	Reduction in program	(10,000)
16	Kendall HP - general cabin renewal	Reduction in program	(120,000)
17	Surf Beach HP - Accessible cabin compliance	Reduction in program	(80,000)
18	Kiama Harbour Cabins - general cabin renewal	Reduction in program	(230,000)
19	Surf Beach HP - non compliant cabin deck replacement	Reduction in program	(45,000)
20	Seven Mile HP - Safari Tent renewal	Reduction in program	(600,000)
21	Werri Beach HP - southern amenities refurbishment (roofing, gutters, doors, painting)	Reduction in program	(80,000)
	Footpaths & cycleways:		(1,290,000)
22	Croft Place Reserve Footpath renewal	Reduction in program	(50,000)
23	Bicycle Facilities program (Annual allocation)	Reduction in program	(150,000)
24	South Kiama Drive footpath Attunga Ave to Marks St	Reduction in program	(89,000)
25	Shoalhaven Street Footpath Bland St to Tanner Pl	Reduction in program	(12,000)
26	Shoalhaven Street Footpath Terralong St to Akuna St	Reduction in program	(8,000)
27	Crooked River Rd Footpath Headland Dr to Crooked River Inc. Bridge	Reduction in program	(45,000)
28	Brown Street Cutting Footpath	Reduction in program	(48,000)
29	Boneyard Reserve Footpath	Reduction in program	(5,000)
30	Black Head Reserve Footpath	Reduction in program	(5,000)

Capital Variation Details

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31	Kalang Road, Kiama Heights - Attunga Avenue to Playground	Reduction in program	(70,000)
32	Attunga Avenue, Kiama Heights - South Kiama Drive to Kalang Rd	Reduction in program	(20,000)
33	North Kiama Drive, Kiama Downs - Riverside Drive to Iluka Crescent	Reduction in program	(85,000)
34	Blackwood Street, Gerringong - Rowlins Road to Shopping Centre	Reduction in program	(3,900)
35	Collins St, Minnamurra St to Terralong St Footpath renewal	Reduction in program	(54,000)
36	Kalang Road, Kiama Heights - Attunga Avenue to Playground	Reduction in program	(25,000)
37	Attunga Avenue, Kiama Heights - South Kiama Drive to Kalang Rd	Reduction in program	(25,000)
38	North Kiama Drive, Kiama Downs - Riverside Drive to Iluka Crescent	Reduction in program	(15,000)
39	Blackwood Street, Gerringong - Rowlins Road to Shopping Centre	Reduction in program	(21,100)
	Recreation and Open Space:		(731,000)
40	Street & Reserve Furniture	Reduction in program	(8,000)
41	Scroll Sculpture repair	Reduction in program	(10,560)
42	Leisure Centre - box gutter roof investigation & repair	Reduction in program	(40,000)
43	Leisure Centre - Windows assessment	Reduction in program	(20,000)
44	Kiama Harbour Boat Ramp Boat Handling Jetty South Replacement	Reduction in program	(145,000)
45	Open Space & Recreation Strategic Plan - priority actions	Reduction in program	(45,000)
46	Street & Reserve Furniture	Reduction in program	(2,000)
47	Kiama Harbour Boat Ramp Boat Handling Jetty South Replacement	Reduction in program	(30,000)
	Roads and Bridges:		(300,560)

Capital Variation Details

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48	Union Way/Seg 03 Blackwall St to Chippewa Rd/Street Furniture/Bollards	Reduction in program	(3,000)
49	Mt Brandon Road/RDA driveway	Reduction in program	(5,000)
50	Illoura Place, Burnett Ave to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(3,000)
51	Wandama Lane, Johnson St to Johnson St Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(3,000)
52	Michael Crescent, Ironbark Cres to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	3,000
53	Bridge program (annual bulk allocation)	Reduction in program	(150,000)
54	Union Way/Seg 03 Blackwall St to Chippewa Rd/Street Furniture/Bollards	Reduction in program	(12,000)
55	Riberry Lane/Seg 01 Broughton Creek to End/Surface	Reduction in program	(20,000)
56	Mt Brandon Road/RDA driveway	Reduction in program	(15,000)
57	Knights Hill Road, Jamberoo Mtn Rd to Knights Hill Rd nth sth & east end Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(20,000)
58	Kilburnie Place/Seg 01 Belinda St to End/Surface	Reduction in program	(13,000)
59	Commissioner's Lane/Seg 01 Cathedral Rocks Ave to End/Surface	Reduction in program	(15,000)
60	Anderson Place/Seg 01 Ironbark Cr to End/Surface	Reduction in program	(20,000)
61	Charmian Clift Place, Whitton Pl to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(12,000)
62	Coryule Place, Bland St to Cul De Sac Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(25,000)
63	Wandama Lane, Johnson St to Johnson St Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(7,000)
64	Illoura Place, Burnett Ave to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(12,000)
65	Robson Place, Armstrong Ave to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(20,000)
66	Thornett Way, Meehan Dr to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(10,000)

Capital Variation Details

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67	Michael Crescent, Ironbark Cres to End Road Surface Renewal	Reduction in program	(8,000)	(370,000)
	Stormwater Assets:			
68	Moore St, Gerringong Kerb and Gutter	Reduction in program	(15,000)	
69	Stormwater Asset renewal program (Municipality wide)	Reduction in program	(23,000)	
70	Stafford St - drainage augmentation	Reduction in program	(40,000)	
71	Free Selectors Rd causeway upgrade	Reduction in program	(20,000)	
72	Commissioners Ln - Kerb & gutter & drainage	Reduction in program	(150,000)	
73	Stormwater Asset renewal program (Municipality wide)	Reduction in program	(77,000)	
74	Gerringong / Jamberoo flood study infrastructure	Additional funding brought on to cover shortfall between council funding and received tenders	295,000	
75	Crooked River Road - Rural gateway transition (high to low speed transition)	Successful in receiving grant funding	50,000	
76	Bong Bong St Raised threshold and wombat crossing	Successful in receiving grant funding	109,000	129,000
	Traffic Facilities:			
77	Kiama Traffic & Parking Study - priority actions	Reduction in program	(50,000)	
78	Traffic Facilities improvement program	Reduction in program	(50,000)	(100,000)
	Waste Services:			
79	Minnamurra Waste Depot Masterplan	Reduction in program	(100,000)	(100,000)
	ICT:			
80	Council Chambers AV Equipment upgrade	Reduction in program	(90,000)	(90,000)

Capital Variation Details

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	Plant and Equipment:			
81	Major Plant & equipment replacement	Reduction in program	(306,000)	
82	Motor Vehicle Replacement program	Reduction in program	(70,000)	
83	Major Plant & equipment replacement	Reduction in program	(524,500)	(900,500)
	<u>Playgrounds:</u>			
84	Eureka Reserve Playground renewal	Reduction in program	(53,000)	
85	Waabie Reserve Playground replacement	Reduction in program	(50,000)	
86	Eureka Reserve Playground renewal	Reduction in program	(22,000)	(125,000)
	Total Reduction			(5,308,060)

Capital Variation Details

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16.2 Councillor Brown, report - LGNSW Annual Conference 2022Responsible Director: Office of the Chief Executive Officer

Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2022

Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley

23-25 October 2022

The conference was actually a lot larger than I thought. In all, there were 900 delegates and we managed to get through more than 150 motions. Most motions were dealing with issues regarding the financial sustainability of their council, including aspects to do with rate pegging and government cost shifting. Other matters discussed were ownership and control of the Rural Fire Brigades, housing, infrastructure and planning.

On the Sunday, I had the opportunity to talk with John Brogden, Chair of Lifeline, and his wife Lucy. It was good to catch-up with my former colleague and see how well he looks. He also promised to visit Kiama as a guest speaker on mental health should we request that.

On the Monday night I had a good chat with the Lord Mayor of Parramatta, Cr Donna Davis, and two other councillors from Parramatta. It was amazing for them to hear how small our LGA is with so few people. Each of their wards are larger than the whole population of Kiama and they each have a staffer to assist with their council duties.

Of course I had the pleasure of meeting many other councillors and mayors and general managers and most of us shared many similar concerns for our respective communities.

I thought the panel discussion on Tuesday morning was very good. There were five speakers including the Minister for Local Government, Wendy Tuckerman MP and her shadow, Greg Warren MP. The Minister showed her knowledge of the local government sector but did not provide many assurances to the issues raised. Greg Warren also showed he was very much across Local Government matters and made a number of election promises.

The Minister for Roads, Sam Farroway MP, spoke as did his shadow, John Graham MLC. Both spoke well and with good knowledge of the Roads portfolio, especially in relation to block funding from the government to Councils and the need for significant more funding required to fix our roads which is needed more than ever due to all the rain.

Finally, Robert Borsak MLC, from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers spoke about his platform to abolish rate pegging altogether. I am not a supporter of this policy.

Overall, I thought the conference was very well planned and executed. It would have been nice to do a site inspection or two but these were not offered.