



**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC FORUM
HELD ON 24 JULY 2024**

1. Opening

The Public Forum commenced at pm.

2. Presentations relating to listed Items on the Council Agenda

The following presenters were heard:

	Name	Item no	Item description	For/Against
1	Ellanor Pavlovich	9.2	Captains Flat Pool Project Update	For
2	Ian Baker from Kangaroos Club	9.3	Grant Funding Agreements: Kangaroos Rugby League Club (Freebody Oval) and Blues Football Club (Seiffert Oval)	Against point 4
3	Zara Baker from Kangaroos Club	9.3	Grant Funding Agreements: Kangaroos Rugby League Club (Freebody Oval) and Blues Football Club (Seiffert Oval)	Against point 4
4	John Talbot	10.2	Audit of QPRC Sports Courts	For

3. Petitions

There were no petitions submitted.

4. 'Questions on Notice' from the Public

Responses to the following 'Questions on Notice' received up to 17 July 2024 were provided and tabled at the meeting (see attached for responses):

	Received from	In relation to:
1	Braidwood Community Association	Projects and services in Braidwood, and Council's Integrated Planning documents
2	Christian Thun on behalf of Queanbeyan-Palerang Action Group	Aquatics Strategic Plan
3	Greg Cameron	Bungendore pool, Mick Sherd Oval and Bungendore's water supply

5. Presentations by Invitation from the General Manager

There were no presentations.

6. Closure

As there were no further matters, the Public Forum closed at 5.42pm.



ATTACHMENT TO MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC FORUM HELD ON 24 July 2024

‘Questions on Notice’ from the Public

Responses to the following ‘Questions on Notice’ received up to Wednesday 17 July 2024 were provided and tabled at the meeting.

1. Question submitted by the Braidwood Community Association

There were a number of unanswered questions and lack of feedback from the submission made on the draft QPRC Integrated Plans which answers would now be appreciated. Also, there are some statements made by the BCA to which staff did not respond to:

Off-street Carparking and Renewal of 88 Wallace Street

The BCA would appreciate confirmation that the associated project Stage 1 of [Renewal - 88 Wallace Street](#), with funding of \$1.4m from NSW RHF and \$800,000 from QPRC, will be rolled over into the 2024-25 Operational Plan. (p5)

Yes, subject to approval by the NSW RHF to amend the deed. An information report will be provided to Council on this project.

Roads

The BCA asked whether Council considers that the Wyanbene Causeway is also need of replacement? (p5)

Council will be undertaking a feasibility study to determine associated costs for replacement of the existing causeway Wyanbene Causeway with a bridge structure over the Shoalhaven River.

A recreational path around the outskirts of Braidwood for the benefit of residents and visitors alike remains a priority for the community, including the concreting of the current washed out gravel path along Bombay Road to Garvey Street’ (p6). Feedback please?

The Braidwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan (2020) which is available on Council's website, <https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Policies-Strategies-and-Plans/Strategies-and-Plans>, guides the current work programs of the projects identified as higher priority by the community at that time. Paths in the town that received high priority rating through the consultation and have been completed included:

- Wallace across Monkittee Bridge (including pedestrian fencing)
- Wilson Street along Ryrie Park through to the Hospital
- Coronation Avenue between Ryrie Street and the Servicemen’s Club
- Elrington Street between Wilson Street and the Recreation Ground
- Lascelles Street between the Chemist and the Supermarket

While the shared path along Coghill Street and Bombay Road was identified as a route it didn't receive a high priority from the community consultation.

Council is currently seeking funding to review these plans and there will be an opportunity for the community to contribute and give feedback about the next phase of pedestrian and bicycle path priorities.

There is a need to have better and safer access to footpaths from roads. This issue has been raised many times by our residents, especially those who use mobility scooters or walking frames. We believe this would only require a small investment in concrete verges at intersections' (p6).

We acknowledge that it can be difficult to integrate concrete paths with gravel shoulders within the heritage town. Several ramps have been installed at the request of mobility scooter users, along with more than 20 new pram ramps. Residents are encouraged to notify these gaps directly with Council to provide clarity on the location of further issues.

Braidwood's water supply

The BCA again asks for a firm commitment from Council that existing water users in Palerang will never have to contribute towards the cost of the installation of Bungendore's water supply pipeline. (p6)

If Council decides to proceed with the Queanbeyan to Bungendore bulk water pipeline project, and unless it is then 100% funded from an external grant source, it is almost a certainty that existing Palerang Water Users will make some financial contribution to the project.

This is because of the simple fact of servicing any loan that might be required to forward fund the receipt of offsetting development contributions. Furthermore, the ongoing general user charges would also contribute to the operation and maintenance of the system. None of these prospects are inconsistent with the historical operation of the Palerang Water and Sewerage funds in any case and one need look no further than the substantial improvements made to the Braidwood Water and Sewerage schemes between 2006 and 2016. In that 10-year period many tens of millions of dollars were expended on the following initiatives:

Water

- New 2ML/d Dissolved Air Flotation and Filtration water treatment plant (WTP)
- Additional 1.5ML storage reservoir and the complete refurbishment and roofing of the 2 existing 0.55ML concrete reservoirs
- Replacement of the 2.2km trunk main from the WTP to Sandholes Road
- Reconstruction of the Shoalhaven Water Pump station
- Replacement of numerous reticulation mains
- The current program of replacement of all revenue water meters with NBiOT meters
- Implementation of digital telemetry system

Sewer

- New 2000EP (equivalent persons) Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)
- Construction of new rising 1.5km sewer rising main from Coghill St to STP
- Replacement of all 3 pre-existing Sewage Pump Stations (SPS)
- Construction of reticulation and servicing of Victory Street creating catchment 4 together with new SPS (SPS#4)
- Construction and reticulation of West Braidwood including 2km+ of reticulation, 2 rising mains and 2 new pumping stations.
- New SPS#2 rising main.
- Implementation of digital telemetry system

Whilst some of these works were the subject of grants, they were also the subject of loan funds, the servicing of which fell to the responsibility of the respective Palerang Water and Sewerage customers more widely. On top of this, and in the light that growth had not yielded much in the way of development contributions, general W&S reserves funds were also used as appropriate. These reserves were drawn from all W&S customers and not just those from Braidwood.

The works above were identified early in the existence of the former Palerang Council through the commissioning of the Eastern Capital City Regional Council Braidwood Sewerage Status Report (2004) and the Palerang Council Braidwood Water Supply Status report (2005). Ultimately, these reports were the evidence needed to undertake the works described above and provided the argument for the amalgamation (circa 2006) of the former standalone Bungendore, Braidwood and Captains Flat Water and Sewerage funds into the single Palerang Water and Sewerage funds of today. Without this, it is unlikely that the full scope of the above works could have been undertaken, not without even more impact on individual user charges in the event that they remained quarantined on a scheme basis.

These works and their costs have been the beneficiary of the moderating effects of the Palerang Water & Sewerage fund models and so it would be if Queanbeyan to Bungendore proceeds. This is as it should be.

Heritage

The BCA notes that the Draft Plan has \$26,000 allocated for Heritage Grants, up slightly from \$25,000 in 2023-24, which is savagely down from \$150,000 in 2021-22. The BCA understands that it is easier to make cuts to discretionary spending like community grants in a period of budgetary austerity but hopes Council will be able to increase the funding for these grants as soon as it is feasible (p6-7).

Feedback please.

We are unable to provide a detailed response at this time. Increased funding for heritage grants would need to be a component of future Council budgets.

Environmental Programs

The BCA notes with concern that environmental actions appear to be continuing to be cut at a time when the effects of climate change are exacerbating extreme weather events, thus increasing the need for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the varying impacts of a changing climate. This is illustrated by the table below showing extracts on the income and expenditure on Environmental Health for the last 3 years [for 2024-25 see p58].

Environmental Health Income and Expenditure (\$000)			
Year	Income	Expenditure	Net Cost
2022-23	302	1,580	(1,278)
2023-24	325	1,412	(1,087)
2024-25	537	1,290	(753)

The BCA does not know why this is happening but given the priority many ratepayers put on environmental enhancement this is of concern. The BCA would like to receive an explanation for this downward trend (p8).

Answer please.

The environmental health budget covers specific regulatory programs. The specific regulatory programs covered by this budget include investigation of pollution incidents, regular inspection

of onsite sewage management systems and monitoring of the reticulated water supply. It is not used for environmental enhancement or climate change action and mitigation programs – see page 39 of Councils Service Statement Document for more detail on areas covered under this budget.

Climate change mitigation and adaption is covered by the Sustainability Service Statement – see page 60.

Flooding at Braidwood Rec Ground and Braidwood Life Centre

The BCA is pleased that Council is allocating \$150,000 for drainage design and \$50,000 for sportsground drainage. The BCA would appreciate advice on whether this will solve the problem of the Life Centre flooding? Similarly, given the bulk of the funding is for design, what are the next steps in this process and the timelines? (p8).

A design has been completed; the funding is to carry out the works with a view to it providing the solution.

Community Transport

There is no public transport and limited private bus transport from Braidwood to regional cities. The BCA has researched the Community Transport system operated by Eurobodalla Shire Council and other Councils. This is funded from a number of sources and provides a successful model that could be followed by QPRC. The BCA urges Council to investigate the need for this service, and ways to implement it.' (p8)

Feedback please?

Community transport is included as a priority in Braidwood's Community Plan. More details about the Eurobodalla Community Transport System will be sought.

15.6% increase in Palerang water access charge

The BCA is grateful to Council staff for providing some recent data on some of the key indicators for the water fund, even though our questions were received too late to be considered as a Question on Notice. The data provided and the assumptions used in the modelling to determine the water charges are given below.

Year	Balance on water fund	Developer Contributions (\$000)		Residential Assessments (No)		Non-Residential Assessments (No)		Pensioner Assessments (No)	
		Actual	Modelling	Actual	Modelling	Actual	Modelling	Actual	Modelling
2018-19			800	2279		239		270	
			Average of previous 3 years in current prices		2018+19 2.7%pa		2018+19 2.7%pa		2018+19 2.7%pa
2020-21	TBC	403	824	2,389	2,404	373	252	330	285
2021-22	TBC	1,934	861	2,458	2,469	349	259	333	292
2022-23	TBC	147	921	2,469	2,535	349	266	332	300
2023-04	TBC	2,626	962	2,617	2,604	351	273	334	308
Total 2020-24		5,110	3,568						

As a result of our questions Council staff identified a minor error in the calculation of the closing balance on the water fund and so this data could not be provided until the

error is rectified. This will provide important information on the financial health of the Palerang Water Fund.’(p3).

Q. Has the minor error in the balance on the Water Fund been rectified? If so, what are the balances on the Palerang Water Fund from 2020-21 to 2023-24? If not, what is the error and how long will it take to rectify this?

While we don't report separately on Queanbeyan Water Fund and Palerang Water fund, we are able to identify this figure in our ledger. The figure reported for the 2023-24 year below is only a draft as the final end of year processing and reconciling has not yet occurred, as such this figure may change.

20/21 - \$8,775,170

21/22 - \$2,291,160

22/23 - \$160,424

23/24 - \$3,973,870 (draft)

Q. We neglected to ask previously for the actual water usage per assessment in Palerang, which is a further critical indicator for the operation of the Water Fund. Can staff please provide the actual water usage per assessment in Palerang from 2020-21 to 2023-24?

Results are an average kL for the reporting period across all assessments (both residential and non-residential). We are unable to provide the actual usage per assessment as this would be a breach of privacy.

2020 – 180kL/assessment

2021 – 149kL/assessment

2022 – 149kL/assessment

2023 – 288kL/assessment

2024 – We do not have all the results yet.

Q. In the past staff shared their estimate / forecast of the water funds' income and expenditure for the current year. Can staff please share the estimate / forecast of the Palerang water fund's income and expenditure for 2024-25, together with the estimate of the closing balance on the water fund and loans at end of June 2025?

Council does not report separately on Queanbeyan Water Fund and Palerang Water Fund. We do have forecast income and expenditure for the QPRC Water fund, and this can be found in Councils long term financial plan. Income and expenditure can be found in the Income Statement. The cash balances for this fund can be found in the Statement of Financial Performance. The Cashflow statement will provide further information on the cash movements for the QPRC Water Fund.

While separate information may have been provided in the past, this is not something that we regularly keep reports for so to be able to generate this now would require significant resources. Council's finance team is focussed on preparing the annual financial statements for 2023/24 and as such are unable to produce this information currently.

Loan information can be found in the quarterly budget review reports that are presented to Council.

2. Question submitted by: Christian Thun on behalf of Queanbeyan-Palerang Action Group

Page 37 of the Aquatic Strategic Plan states:

.... the completion of stage 3 of the Regional Sports Complex during which the pool would be completed is currently unfunded and unlikely to be delivered in the foreseeable future. There is community support to review this plan and completely redevelop the Queanbeyan Aquatics as the accredited competition and training centre, with deep water access and hydrotherapy. This major project would require a professional feasibility study and business case.

Question: Please advise the progress of the development of plans (and associated timelines) to seek a professional feasibility study and business case for the redevelopment of the Queanbeyan Aquatic Centre.

The strategic plan notes that there is community support for the redevelopment of the Queanbeyan Aquatics Centre. There is no budget allocated for a professional feasibility study and business case in the Operational Plan or the 4-year Delivery Plan. Nor is it part of the key strategies detailed in the Aquatic Strategic Plan on pages 42-43.

The Strategic Aquatic plan indicates on page 42 Section 11.4, under Strategy 1 (Ensure financial sustainability of QPRC pools) Strategy 1.1

Develop a long-term plan to ensure the financial sustainability of QPRC pools while keeping fees affordable.

Question: Given the urgency and size of the fiscal challenges facing QPRC and the additional financial burden placed on ratepayers to deal with these challenges could QPRC please provide

i. The underlying rationale and key features making up the financial sustainability and fee affordability for QPRC aquatic facilities.

The operationalisation for this strategic action is currently being developed.

ii. Whether such rationale will utilise an approach to indoor aquatic facilities based on population catchment such as that used by the Victorian Government.

Public pools play an important role in creating social and community cohesion and Council's position remains that all community pools will continue to operate. Council sets the Fees and Charges as advertised in the Fees and Charges Policy, and Swimming Pool fees are based on Partial Cost Recovery to promote or encourage local economic or social activity.

iii. To what extent such rationale supports the NSW government's South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036 - which identifies Queanbeyan as a Strategic Centre in the region.

See i above.

3. Question submitted by: Greg Cameron

Questions in relation to Bungendore.

(1) When will QPRC demolish the existing swimming pool?

QPRC will not be demolishing the existing Swimming Pool.

(2) Under what Act of Parliament was the swimming pool built on Crown Land?

The then Crown Land Management legislation which has since been superseded by the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*.

(3) Under what Act of Parliament can QPRC demolish the swimming pool?

Council will not be demolishing the pool.

(4) Under what Act of Parliament will the future use of the swimming pool land be authorised?

Crown Land Management Act 2016.

(5) Under what Act of Parliament was Mick Sherd oval established on Crown Land?

The then Crown Land Management legislation which has since been superseded by the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*.

(6) Can the Act of Parliament used to establish Mick Sherd Oval be amended to provide for its exclusive use by the Department of Education during school hours on school days?

This is a question best directed to the Department of Education.

(7) Is there a more beneficial use of Mick Sherd oval during school hours than by school children; if so, what is it?

The oval and surrounds are a community facility, available for passive recreation and user groups. Ovals are booked for hire and fees paid by regular sporting and user groups, including schools in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges Policy.

(8) Will there be no greenfield land development in Bungendore until a mains drinking water supply pipeline is built from Queanbeyan to Bungendore; when will this pipeline be built?

The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure will not consider new Planning Proposals beyond the current Bungendore urban zoned residential area without a reliable increase of the potable water supply to Bungendore.

At the 12 April 2023 meeting Council agreed to advance the pipeline to Tender Ready status, and staff are proceeding with these works. A further report will be provided to Council on the status of the Water Agreement negotiations and Business Case prior to any formal approval to proceed with construction.