



## **Dodges Ferry Community Conversation Meeting Okines Community Centre – 28 July 2016**

### **Councillors in Attendance**

Mayor Kerry Vincent, Deputy Mayor Brett McDonald, Crl Carmel Torenus, Crl Vlad Gala, Clr Kerry Degrassi, Clr Natham Reynolds.

### **Apologies**

Clr Deborah De Williams, Clr Graeme Evans.

### **Staff in Attendance**

Robert Higgins - General Manager, Russell Fox – Manager Engineering & Regulatory Services, Stacey Gadd – Communications Officer, Darren Carter – Municipal Inspector.

### **Questions Relating to Dogs/Animal Control**

- Q. Many people want to do the right thing but it's unclear what and where dogs are allowed. As dogs on beaches regulations are not enforced people disregard the signs, often even those who do the right thing. Would like to see a focus on protecting the sand flats and river mouth area.
- R. Through previous community consultation the current rules/regulations/sections were created and settled upon. All entrances to the beaches are clearly sign marked and patrols are undertaken when possible. Dog owners are encouraged to take responsibility and abide by the regulations. Council is working with Parks and Wildlife to enforce the restrictions around the Carlton River area.
  
- Q. Why is there a restriction between the Surf Club and Carlton River?
- R. Council conducted a survey and found the majority of users were rarely using the ends of Carlton River and Park Beach so a compromise was reached by allocating a section in the middle to dog users so people who don't want to associate with dogs didn't have to. The Carlton River end of Carlton Beach is also a vital area for breeding birds during this time.



- Q. What is the process for review of the Dog Management Plan?
- R. The Plan must be reviewed every five years and includes the review of content and controls in the current plan. The current plan will be open for submissions from the public and all these will be considered. The process is scheduled to commence in April 2017.
- Q. Are the rights and responsibilities of dog owners included in the Plan?
- R. Yes.
- Q. Is an off lead dog exercise area still planned for Rantons Road?
- R. This is still being pursued and Council will consider an allocation in next financial year's capital budget for it.
- Q. Would Council collaborate with DPIPWE and State Government to work out a cost effective way to deal with rabbits?
- R. Rabbits and other invasive species is the responsibility of DPIPWE. However, the issue is something we can discuss with them.
- Q. What about feral cats?
- R. Again, DPIPWE deal with this issue. Dodges Ferry Recreation Reserve will be a test case for Sorell but it is recognised that feral cats are a serious problem due to disease and loss of native wildlife.

A resident congratulated Council on doing something positive to try and manage cats in our Municipality. Well done to Council's NRM Officer Paul Gray (NRM) and hopefully this will inspire the Government to do likewise in areas under their control.

### **Waste Management**

- Q. Congratulations to Council on the green and hard waste collections. However, there are often piles left afterwards. What can be done for this?
- R. When Council surveyed residents the results supported the current system. Council continue to work on educating the public on the rights and responsibilities of the service – there are mutual obligations on both Council and the public. Bookings for collections has improved and collections as a whole has improved but due to having a new contractor conducting the collections there are still some teething issues. A lot of work has been done on Council's Waste Management Services to get it running efficiently.



- Q. Josephs Road is known as Old Tip Road and some people still use it as that. Council is good at cleaning it up but is there more that can be done?
- R. It's hard to control those people who do the wrong thing and there is no simple answer to this. Council's Municipal Inspector does investigate dumping and if a perpetrator can be found they will be fined. If evidence of the vehicle or people carrying out littering can be provided we would strongly advise the public to report incidences so we can investigate as appropriate.
  
- Q. Roadside mowing contract – can the rubbish be picked up first then mowing completed so the mowing doesn't spread the rubbish further.
- R. Council has found these types of program work best with community support. We have active groups in the Southern Beaches and Primrose Sands areas who regularly do rubbish clean ups.

#### **Questions related to Roads, Traffic Management and Infrastructure**

- Q. What is being done in regards to traffic management outside the school on Old Forcett Road?
- R. A lot of work has been done in the area on traffic calming, for example at the shopping area and the footpaths and walkways etc. Council's Engineers have designed a road safety project for the area which includes installation of new footpaths and pedestrian crossings. The capital cost of completing these works is over \$400,000 and this will need to be considered and prioritised in future capital budgets.
  
- Q. Would this involve lowering speed limit further?
- R. Potentially.
  
- Q. What about a crossing on Carlton Beach Road?
- R. The design being completed for the area will likely include pedestrian crossings. State Growth have carried out traffic counts in the area as part of their planning.



- Q. Metro bus service – bringing a service to Dodges Ferry? A Redline trip is \$12.10 each way to Hobart. Car transport is cheaper, but not environmentally sustainable and it's also not helping the traffic problems. Dodges Ferry is closer to Hobart than South Arm and has more people on route than South Arm, yet they have a Metro service and Dodges Ferry doesn't.
- R. Much work has been done in this area over the past 12 months. Current Metro contracts run out in 2017/2018 and nothing will change until this time. Numbers and growth of regions are looked at which means our local services will change but it's not known how they will change. Indicators at this stage look like a Metro service will be a Sorell and Midway Point service. Priority bus lanes and pool cars are being investigated. Council has been invited through State Growth to join the greater Hobart journey management team to look at traffic and public transport issues. Electric buses and size of buses are some of the things being investigated.
- Q. What can be done about the congestion at Midway Point?
- R. The State Government has asked Council to put in a submission for the 2017/2018 budget and are investigating ideas about what can be done there. A lot of attention is being paid to the area currently. It is recognised that the growth of area will mean more traffic in Sorell so it is being taken seriously.

#### Questions Related to Growth of Region

- Q. The Airport developments will bring new tourists into our area. What issues both positive and negative will this bring?
- R. Predictions see tourist numbers set to double for our region. The SERDA Report and Council lobbying means we are getting more attention and they are gathering a variety of data on our region. What this will mean for our region is still not known but the recognition and information gathering is a positive sign.
- Q. Is there a projected growth rate of the region?
- R. Figures vary but the Sorell Municipality will remain in top 3 or 4 for growth in Council municipalities within Tasmania. The SERDA report shows we are growing and we will continue to grow, but the growth has slowed. The population isn't growing as fast, but the numbers of dwellings are. This affects traffic (amongst other infrastructure matters) and it's a preferred outcome for Sorell to become more self-sufficient – and for this we need to have better education facilities, an industrial/commercial area etc., to keep people in the area for schooling and employment.



- Q. Dodges Ferry is family friendly but seeing a lot of development and land for sale etc. What are the plans for the development of Dodges Ferry?
- R. Dodges Ferry has changed from a traditional shack area to an urban commuter township. Development is controlled by land use planning which zones areas and controls how it can spread etc. In Dodges Ferry, current future growth areas if approved by the Tasmanian Planning Commission would likely be a minimum of one hectare sized blocks due to water and sewerage requirements.
- Q. In regards to the State-wide Planning Scheme reform, is Sorell planning a submission?
- R. Council made a submission on the common provisions. There will be months of hearings on 300 plus submissions that were received State-wide. We await a reply.
- Q. Can subdivision developments ensure there are trees and green spaces within them? Sorell is a bad example of this.
- R. Sorell's Senior Planner is passionate about trees and green spaces and does try to ensure this happens in developments but unfortunately, not all developers share this view.
- Q. Whilst Sorell is being developed to be more sufficient, due to lifestyle reasons the Southern Beaches is becoming more recognisable as commutable to Hobart. What's being done in regards for this?
- R. Council is working with different groups on conducting a skills demand audit for the region and are currently seeking funding for it. 67% of our workforce travel out of the Municipality every day. It is hoped we can bring more employment back into the area by becoming more self-sufficient. Funding is being sought to construct a new building at the Trade Training Centre in Sorell to train locals in construction skills. Programs such as these are hoped to get locals trained and upskilled to be able to work locally.

### Other Questions

- Q. Does Council handle street lighting? Parnella Road is a curved road with many driveways with minimal lighting and it's dangerous.
- R. TasNetworks handle this and charge Council for the power but Council can make a submission.



- Q. Youth Services – there doesn't seem to be a lot in our community?
- R. With regard to external government and not for profit service providers, there isn't. Council's building in Fitzroy Street is being turned into a youth centre to provide youth services. A number of not for profits have indicated interest but this will go through an EOI process to find appropriate provider/providers and the most sustainable service delivery model. Council has discussed local needs with Sorell School, youth and service providers about what's required and Council will be seeking expertise from these providers rather than trying to provide it ourselves.
- Q. Some people see trees as dangerous but research is showing how much value trees add to communities and properties and their effect on groundwater when removed. How does Council see management of trees?
- R. Sorell Council has a staff member who assesses trees and also utilises an Arborist from the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens. Council is compiling a tree register – a collection of significant trees. Civil matters regarding arguments between neighbours regarding trees isn't governed by Council as it's a Common Law matter.
- Q. Tourism – How does Sorell benefit from the visiting tourists?
- R. Council recognises that in the context of tourism products on the Tasman and East Coast, Sorell is not a destination but rather plays more of a role as the regional service centre. Efforts are being made to make Sorell more amenable and present better which will encourage people to stop and hopefully visit local businesses. Sorell remains the gateway to the East Coast and the Peninsula and we need to embrace this and take full advantage of it.
- Q. Council shouldn't be spraying glyphosate on the roadsides. It causes damage to the environment and also impacts on human health. Can Council look at using steaming as an alternative to glyphosate like Glamorgan Spring Bay does?
- R. Council is happy to investigate the cost benefit factors of steaming and report back on this.
- Q. Boat sheds remissions – people have been paying rates and are now questioning the legitimacy of this. How will Council rectify this?
- R. Council appropriately carried out a thorough investigation into the situation and sought advice and clarification from a number of parties (Office of the Valuer General, Crown Land Services, LGAT) including a formal legal opinion. The position of Council is as follows:

# Community



# Conversations

- Council relied on the Valuer-General's roll (which included the allocation of requisite Government valuations to identified PID's) in levying rates, as all Councils do, and are entitled to.
- Council is now aware of the purported effect on rates of the exemption that applies to those categories of Crown land as specified in Section 87(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1993* on which these private marine (and other) facilities lie.
- Until the matter is resolved definitively (which will likely require an amendment to the Act), Council will not be charging rates on those applicable PID's onwards from the 2016/2017 financial year.
- As for previous years, there is no scope for Council to remit rates charged for previous years.

Q. What are the plans for the future health and wellbeing of the community? Particularly the coast and environment? Plans for lifestyle, caring for environment etc?

R. Council has a great NRM Facilitator on board which has reinforced respect for our local environmental issues. There are many examples of Council working to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities:

- Recycled duck board walkways have been installed to protect beach access and sand dunes.
- Recent improvements and upgrades to our parks to provide better recreational facilities.
- Council has an ongoing program to extend walkways - the Orielton Lagoon Loop has been planned with a grant applied for and staged constructions starting this financial year.
- Council has spoken with the Heart Foundation programs to look at planning and programs for healthy living.
- Council on the Ageing (COTA) have used Councils work on walkways, pathways, streetscaping and pedestrian crossings to accommodate for elderly access and adherence to current standards as an example at an International conference.
- Council continues to build relationships with the Green Army, CVA etc. to undertake projects (but these require ongoing support and community input).
- Drains to prevent stormwater running into Orielton Lagoon have been constructed.
- Council are requiring silt traps to be built as part of subdivision developments now.
- Engineering staff are working with developers to construct footpaths and pathways to link communities (e.g. Midway Point).



- There are coastal walkways in the pipeline at Lewisham. Many of these raise issues for Council to work with Crown Land Services and PWS as there is a cost to Council to do this. Council is lobbying for the State Government to step up in this area as it's hard to justify spending money on land Council don't own. Coastal erosion is an issue locally but isn't receiving any Government support so far. Council will continue to lobby for this.

Q. What can be done about the car park at the Surf Club?

R. Council is working with the Minister and the Surf Club to look at how we can tidy the area up. The car park will never be able to accommodate Surf Club Carnivals numbers and we don't want to disrupt the sand dunes but the installation of a platform or public area for the general public is being investigated.

Q. Future of Council and an aging population. Okines is running a program for elderly people to garden within the community garden. Will Council be interested in making a long term commitment to the program so the program doesn't have to continually rely on getting funding?

R. Programs like these are best supported through applications to Council's annual Community and Youth Grants Program. Council has supported this particular program through these means before. It's Council's view that these type of programs work better and are far more sustainable when they have the full support of the community as a whole.

Q. The whale watching area at Dodges Ferry, why are there no signs on the highway for this?

R. Tourism signage is State Government managed but Council agree this needs to be looked at.

Q. What is the current status of Council Amalgamations?

R. KMPG continue the feasibility study into the establishment of the following options:

1. Clarence City, Sorell, Glamorgan Spring Bay (all or part thereof) and Tasman Councils; and as a subset of this –
  - a. Clarence City, Sorell and Tasman Councils;
  - b. Sorell and Tasman Councils;
  - c. Sorell, Glamorgan Spring Bay (all or part thereof) and Tasman Councils; and
2. Potential for shared services, fee for service and any other model considered appropriate (including the status quo).



**Community**

**Conversations**

Council will have some figures in September. We will then look at this information and what it means for us before consulting with the community on the findings.