



City of
LAUNCESTON

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

**THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2019
5.30pm**

The Annual General Meeting of the City of Launceston Council was held at the Council Chambers, Town Hall, St John Street, Launceston:

Date: 5 December 2019

Time: 5.30pm

Section 65 Certificate of Qualified Advice

Background

To comply with section 65 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (Tas):

1. A general manager must ensure that any advice, information or recommendation given to the council or a council committee is given by a person who has the qualifications or experience necessary to give such advice, information or recommendation.
2. A council or council committee is not to decide on any matter which requires the advice of a qualified person without considering such advice unless -
 - (a) the general manager certifies, in writing -
 - (i) that such advice was obtained; and
 - (ii) the general manager took the advice into account in providing general advice to the council or council committee; and
 - (b) a copy of that advice or, if the advice was given orally, a written transcript or summary of that advice is provided to the council or council committee with the general manager's certificate.

Certification

I certify that:

- (i) the advice of a qualified person has been sought where required;
- (ii) this advice was taken into account in providing general advice to the council or council committee; and
- (iii) a copy of the advice, or a written transcript or summary of advice provided orally, is included with the agenda item.



Michael Stretton
General Manager

City of Launceston

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2019

Present: **Councillor** **A M van Zetten (Mayor)**
D C Gibson (Deputy Mayor)
J Finlay
A E Dawkins
R I Soward
P S Spencer
J G Cox
A G Harris

In Attendance: **Mr M Stretton (General Manager)**
Mr S G Eberhardt (Director Infrastructure Services)
Mrs L M Hurst (Director Development Services and
Acting Director Facilities Management)
Ms T Puklowski (Director Creative Arts and Cultural
Services)
Ms L Foster (Director Corporate Services)
Mr N Williams (Manager Finance)
Mrs L Purchase (Acting Manager Corporate
Strategy)
Mrs A Rooney (Committee Clerk)

Apologies: **Councillor** **N D Daking**
D H McKenzie
K P Stojansek

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1 OPENING OF MEETING - ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, opened the Meeting at 5.30pm and noted apologies from Councillors N D Daking, Councillor K P Stojansek and Councillor D H McKenzie.

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, noted the presence of a quorum and thanked those members of the public in attendance (and whose names appear on the record of attendance).

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Local Government Act 1993 (Tas) - section 48

(A councillor must declare any interest that the councillor has in a matter before any discussion on that matter commences.)

No Declarations of Interest were identified as part of this Meeting

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015 - Regulation 35(1)(b)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the City of Launceston Council held on 6 December 2018 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

DECISION: 5 December 2019

MOTION

Moved Councillor P S Spencer, seconded Councillor A G Harris.

That the Motion, as per the Recommendation to Council, be adopted.

CARRIED 8:0

FOR VOTE: Mayor Councillor A M van Zetten, Deputy Mayor Councillor D C Gibson, Councillor J Finlay, Councillor A E Dawkins, Councillor R I Soward, Councillor P S Spencer, Councillor J G Cox and Councillor A G Harris

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

4.1 Public Questions Without Notice

4.1.1 Mr Lionel Morrell - Response to Question on Notice

1. With regard to Agenda Item 5.1 - Question 6 on Notice - all questions were lodged within the deadline specified by the Council, so why does it say, or imply, that the question was late and therefore there was insufficient time to answer it?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, responded by saying that it did not say the question was late, simply that there was insufficient time to provide the full details in a response.

2. With respect it does say it was late and the question is not answered and no indication is given when it will be answered. So, the question is, when will the answer be provided?

Mr Shane Eberhardt (Director Infrastructure Services) responded by saying an answer would be provided within the next couple of weeks.

4.1.2 Mr Gabriel Barnes - Building Surveying Services

Mr Barnes asked the following questions on behalf of Metrics Building Surveyors, Trident Building Surveying and Building Surveying Services.

With reference to the Annual Financial Report and Building Surveying Services unit:

1. How many staff are referred to in Expenses?
2. Can Council explain the rather substantial \$14,000 increase in full cost attribution expenses between the 2017/2018 year and the 2018/2019 year?
3. Considering the material and services costs total of only \$51,000 during the year or \$980 per week in business overhead and on-costs, is the Council confident that it has identified and reported all costs associated with the operation of the Building Surveying Service Significant Business Activity?

With reference to the \$19,000 loss in the 2017/2018 year and another \$14,000 in the 2018/2019 year - a total of \$33,000, I ask the following questions:

4. As part of the Building Surveying Service, is it the Council's policy to undertake direct marketing of its building surveying service on building sites where they are not the building surveyors and outside of the Launceston City Council with offers to undertake building surveying work at (and I quote) ... *a cheaper price than your current building surveyor*?
5. Can the Council confirm if their annually published fees and charges are applied to all building surveying activities or are they only a guide and staff can offer discounts to developers at their discretion?
6. Can the Council confirm it charged a service fee of approximately \$5,000 to provide building surveying and inspection services for the new Parkside Caravan Park at St Helens with 20 cabins, a 100 seat restaurant and associated infrastructure and buildings when private building surveyors quoted between \$25,000 and \$28,000 to do the same job? Keep in mind we have a financial loss in the activity.
7. It is annoying enough paying rates to the Council, who, in turn uses ratepayer funds to subsidise a discount service in direct competition against Launceston small businesses, but can the Council explain why it seems to be acceptable for Launceston ratepayers to be subsidising builders and developers in other Council areas with heavily discounted and subsidised fees?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, noted that all these questions would be Taken on Notice and a response provided in the Council Agenda of 23 January 2020.

4.1.3 Mr Christopher Green - *Tomorrow Together* and Town Hall Tapestry

1. With reference to *Tomorrow Together* and how the community can have a voice and in impact in this project, instead of having to deal with it on a web-site, could it be done on a get-together basis with an open agenda?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, responded by saying that information is available in a number of ways, including the Council's web-site, community forums where staff are available face-to-face and a number of events organised involving the local community which are advertised and promoted.

Mr Michael Stretton (General Manager) also responded by saying that the feedback is relevant in terms of the way the *Tomorrow Together* project is being promoted and the Council will endeavor to ensure the public are more informed about more direct face-to-face contact and input.

2. Where has the tapestry gone that used to be displayed in the entrance to the Council Chambers?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, noted that this question would be Taken on Notice and a response provided in the Council Agenda of 23 January 2020.

4.1.4 Dr Umit Sungur - Development Application - St Georges Square

1. Did Council officers receive a qualified arborist's report regarding the development?
2. According to Australian Standard 4970 - Tree Protection Standards, a qualified arborists report is supposed to be presented. Around the protected heritage listed Sequoia trees, were protective fences erected around the on the site? In the tree protection zone, is it legal to have building material dropped on the site and have the Council's Compliance Officers followed up these matters?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, noted that the Council's Compliance Officers are following up. Mrs Leanne Hurst (Director Development Services) stated that the Council is awaiting a vegetation management plan.

3. According to reports, a large branch of the mulberry tree has been removed. Did Council's Compliance Officers attend the site? It appears that multiple breaches are occurring and the Council's Compliance Officers should be following up and it seems the community are doing all the following up and reporting the breaches. What is the fine for multiple breaches?

Mr Michael Stretton (General Manager), responded by saying that the questions being asked a quite wide-ranging and will require specific responses which is beyond what can be achieved in the Annual General Meeting. Mr Stretton stated that the Council's Compliance Officers are following activities on that site, as recently as this afternoon, and as necessary action is being taken to determine validity or compliance. Mr Stretton confirmed that the neighbours do play a role in reporting day-to-day activities. Mr Stretton noted that it would be more appropriate to deal with this matter outside of the Annual General Meeting as it is a specific matter relating to an ongoing Development Application.

4.1.5 Mrs Margot Smart - St Georges Square Development, City Heart and Heritage Issues in the City

1. Subsequent to the previous speaker, is this action in response to a previous action on that site regarding the demolition of a wall without reason?

Mr Michael Stretton (General Manager) responded by saying the permit condition stating that the wall needs to be reconstructed to the satisfaction of the Planning Manager has not been received by the Council so it has not been signed off as being acceptable. The intention is that no demolition can occur on the site until the reconstituted wall has been approved and a building permit has been issued. That is part of the regulatory process that the Council's Compliance Officers have been following up on over the course of the last couple of months.

2. So the issues related to the Sequoia tree are subsequent to that?

Mr Michael Stretton (General Manager) confirmed that was the case and the Sequoia tree issue is separate to the wall, however, there are multiple issues on the site.

3. Does the City Heart project encompass the Mall?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, responded that the City Heart project does encompass the Brisbane Street Mall.

4. Will the Council please do something to get people back into the main artery of the City Heart?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, noted that the Council is working on a number of things and it is hoped a number of announcements will occur over the next few months which should be positive.

5. Could it be considered that a single traffic lane go through the Mall?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, replied that the issue could be considered.

6. [With regard to a focus on heritage in our city] we have to make sure that is the number one important thing in our City but at the moment it just isn't Mr Mayor and I ask what the Council intends to do about it - the main thing?

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, replied the Council, through its Heritage Committee, would continue to work on heritage issues that have

been raised, however, if the community has positive ideas about what we need to be doing, then pass them on.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions on Notice were invited from the public from Saturday, 9 November 2019 and closed at 12.00pm on Monday, 25 November 2019.

5.1 Public Questions on Notice - Mr L J Morrell - 25 November 2019

FILE NO: SF6381

AUTHOR: Anthea Rooney (Committee Clerk)

GENERAL MANAGER: Michael Stretton (General Manager)

QUESTIONS and RESPONSES:

The following questions, submitted in writing, on 25 November 2019 by Mr L J Morrell, have been answered by those indicated in the Agenda Item.

Questions:

1(a). Please list all ratepaying properties occupied by University of Tasmania.

Refer to Question 1.

2(a). Please provide a plan of areas of Inveresk that are leased by Royal National Agricultural and Pastoral

Refer to Question 2.

1. Please advise the list of all properties that are occupied by University of Tasmania and identify which of these properties pay rates?

Response:

Paul Gimpl (Chief Financial Officer)

Properties occupied by the University of Tasmania (UTAS) and charged the Fire Service Levy, are:

- *1 Old Bike Track Lane, Invermay*
 - *6 Barnards Way, Invermay*
 - *75 Newnham Drive, Newnham*
 - *Maritime College, 100 Newnham Drive, Newnham*
 - *17 Plumer Street, Mowbray*
 - *2 Invermay Road, Invermay*
 - *Bank ATM, 75 Newnham Drive, Newnham*
-

5.1 Public Questions on Notice - Mr L J Morrell - 25 November 2019 ...(Cont'd)

Properties occupied by UTAS or their tenant and charged rates (including the Fire Service Levy):

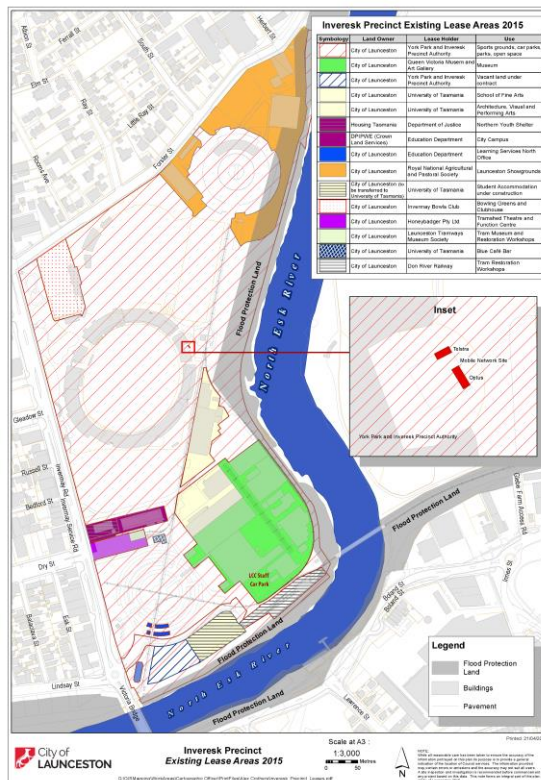
- Child Care Centre, 75 Newnham Drive, Newnham
- Hair Salon, 75 Newnham Drive, Newnham
- Travel Agency, 75 Newnham Drive, Newnham
- Bank Branch, 75 Newnham Drive, Newnham
- Bookshop, 75 Newnham Drive, Newnham

Section 87(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1993 (Tas) exempts land owned and occupied exclusively by the Commonwealth from paying rates. UTAS is a Commonwealth entity so only pays rates on properties they own but are occupied exclusively by a tenant.

2. Please provide a plan of land leased by Royal National Agricultural and Pastoral Society of Tasmania Limited at Inveresk?

Response:

Robert Groenewegen (Manager UTAS Stadium and Inveresk)



5.1 Public Questions on Notice - Mr L J Morrell - 25 November 2019 ...(Cont'd)

3. Please provide a plan of land leased by Don River Railway (Van Dieman Light Railway Society) at Inveresk?

Response:

Robert Groenewegen (Manager UTAS Stadium and Inveresk)

As above - Inveresk Precinct Existing Lease Areas 2015 map.

4. Please provide an explanation why the Title for property in Lindsay Street Launceston occupied by the National Automobile of Tasmania has not been registered in the name of the City Of Launceston Council as intended?

Response:

Michael Stretton (General Manager)

It is still the intention for the title of the Lindsay Street site on which the National Automobile Museum of Tasmania is located to be registered in the Council's name. The title transfer will occur as part of the broader land swap between the University of Tasmania and the Council. As this is a complex transfer which must address a multitude of issues the process it is yet to be finalised. It is expected that the transfer will occur in early 2020.

5. Please confirm if the City Of Launceston Council is in negotiations with other parties regarding the ownership and future development of the Paterson St Central Carpark and also the formal Birchalls shop in Brisbane Street Mall by City of Launceston Council, and when all details of such negotiations will be made public?

Response:

Michael Stretton (General Manager)

The Council is not in a position to comment on this matter.

5.1 Public Questions on Notice - Mr L J Morrell - 25 November 2019 ...(Cont'd)

6. What is the current cost to City of Launceston Council of the development of the area known as Riverbend Park at Lindsay St Launceston, and how much more is to be spent on the completion and further development of this park area?

Response:

Shane Eberhardt (Director Infrastructure Services)

The budget for works at Riverbend Park is \$8,439,176. The cost to the Council as of 31 October is \$2,476,248 after deducting State and Federal grant funding.

Given the lateness of the submission of this question against the Agenda close date, there is insufficient time to determine remaining costs to Council. The major work still to be completed is the grassed area on the eastern side of the site, which will be completed by end of December 2019.

7. What is the cost to City of Launceston Ratepayers for undertaking the clearing of silt from the Tamar and Esk Estuaries?

Response:

Shane Eberhardt (Director Infrastructure Services)

The Launceston Flood Authority (LFA) undertakes the sediment management within kanamaluka/Tamar River. In 2018/2019 LFA operations expenses were funded from State Government contributions of \$523,727 and \$693,294 from the City of Launceston. The LFA spent \$228,390 in 2018/2019 on sediment management.

8. What funds are owed to City of Launceston Council by University of Tasmania (please provide a detailed breakdown)?

Response:

Paul Gimpl (Chief Financial Officer)

No charges owing by the University of Tasmania to the City of Launceston are overdue for payment as at 27 November 2019.

5.1 Public Questions on Notice - Mr L J Morrell - 25 November 2019 ...(Cont'd)

9. What is the cost of the recent administrative changes, to staffing arrangements and the workforce of City Of Launceston Council.

Response:

Michael Stretton (General Manager)

Once implemented, the Organisational Alignment Project (OAP) will deliver a more streamlined, efficient workforce, with a stronger focus on improved service delivery and value for ratepayers.

Initially, there will be a higher cost directly attributable to the restructure by way of redundancies (\$1.3million), however, this cost is expected to be balanced out by an underspend in labour costs in the 2019/2020 financial year.

Ongoing employee costs will increase by approximately \$900K due to an increase in FTEs in key areas, but the trade-off will be an improvement in services to the community.

One of the key components of the OAP is a transition of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG) and the University of Tasmania Stadium to more contemporary and appropriate governance models.

With this reform, the OAP will deliver recurrent savings of between \$2.4 - \$5.2million a year to the Council (including the additional employee costs).

The City of Launceston will still be a lean organisation in terms of staffing costs. Under the new structure, the Council's employee costs will account for 37.7per cent of total operational expenditure which compares favourably with other Councils. For instance, the Hobart City Council's employee costs are 42 per cent of operational expenditure, while other similar Tasmanian councils are around 39 per cent.

6 NOTICES OF MOTION

Notices of Motion were invited from the public from Saturday, 9 November 2018 and closed at 12.00pm on Monday, 25 November 2018.

No Notices of Motion were identified as part of these Minutes

6 ANNUAL REPORTS

6.1 City of Launceston's Annual Reports for the Year Ended 30 June 2019

FILE NO: SF0098

GENERAL MANAGER: Michael Stretton (General Manager)

DECISION STATEMENT:

To adopt the City of Launceston's Annual Reports for the year ended 30 June 2019.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City of Launceston Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2019 be adopted, together with the Annual Reports for the following City of Launceston entities and Authorities:

1. Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery; and
 2. Launceston Flood Authority.
-

Mr M Stretton (General Manager) was in attendance to answer questions of Council in respect of this Agenda Item.

Following the General Manager's Annual Report Summary, the following questions were asked:

Mr Christopher Green - Flood Authority Report

1. **With regard to the rusting steel in the walls, rusting out through the walls and onto the footpaths as we enter the City, is that is what is supposed to happen or was it an misjudgement of what rusting steel does?**

Mr Michael Stretton (General Manager) responded by stating that the walls were constructed by the Flood Authority and it was an artistic intent of the design, however, it is certainly something the Council can investigate.

Mr Christopher Green - City Deal Extension

1. **I was unaware that the City Deal had been extended by an additional five years. What will the extension actually allow us to achieve in the City and what the focus will be?**
-

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, responded by saying that projects to be considered would include things like work on the kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary, revitalisation of the northern suburbs, Smart City initiatives, the University of Tasmania's move to the Inveresk precinct and additional projects that will arise over time. At this stage, the projects to be undertaken are not fixed and there are many things that could occur.

Mr Christopher Green - North East Heritage Rail Extension

- 1. According to media reports regarding the north east heritage rail extension project, what will Launceston contribute to the project?**

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, noted that primarily the project will be managed by the Dorset Council but the City of Launceston will contribute where required. Mr Michael Stretton (General Manager) noted that ultimate responsibility for various project stages will be investigated and acted upon as necessary.

Mr Christopher Green - John Hart Conservatory

- 1. With regards to the wonderful asset we have in the City Park - the John Hart Conservatory, I am just wondering how that foundation stands and whether we still have the capital invested in that building and how is the building performing?**

Mr Shane Eberhardt (Director Infrastructure Services) responded by saying that the initial funds noted by Mr Green for the upkeep and maintenance of the building have been exhausted, however, the City of Launceston is committed to maintaining and looking after the Conservatory and the million dollars has been depleted in ongoing maintenance and management of the building.

[For context, the John Hart Trust was established in the 1920s with ten thousand pounds after Mr John Henry Hart passed.]

Mrs Margot Smart - Funding for City Deal

- 1. Has anything been earmarked for future negotiations of traffic through and around the City?**

The Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, responded by saying that issue is not considered part of the City Deal funding deal and a Masterplan is being developed in consultation with other Councils.

Mrs Smart noted the traffic bottlenecks occurring within the City and questioned whether the Traffic Masterplan referred to by the Mayor was the same one as the one being discussed when she served on Council.

The Mayor noted that the Traffic Masterplan referred to by Mrs Smart is very different and also noted that substantial funding from the State Government will be available over the next three to five years to deal with traffic masterplan requirements.

DECISION: 5 December 2019

MOTION

Moved Councillor R I Soward, seconded Councillor A G Harris.

That the Motion, as per the Recommendation to Council, be adopted.

CARRIED 8:0

FOR VOTE: Mayor Councillor A M van Zetten, Deputy Mayor Councillor D C Gibson, Councillor J Finlay, Councillor A E Dawkins, , Councillor K P Stojansek, Councillor R I Soward, Councillor P S Spencer, Councillor J G Cox, Councillor A G Harris and Councillor T G Walker

7 CLOSE OF MEETING

There being no further business, the Mayor, Councillor A M van Zetten, closed the Annual General Meeting at 6.10pm.
