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Your local voice



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Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday 27 July 2016

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.42 pm. The Chair welcomed members and guests

Apologies: Jenny Adams, Max Kwiatkowski, Shelby Schofield, Lance Williamson

Guest: Caroline Le Couteur, candidate for Murrumbidgee on behalf of the Greens

13 people attended the meeting.

PRESENTATION

Caroline Le Couteur, candidate for Murrumbidgee on behalf of the Greens

Ms Le Couteur spoke about the Green's broad policies

- What the Greens are about – serve people, the planet, not big corporations, had long term view for Canberra
- Spoke about the Greens record for 2008-2012
 - Pushed for 40% reduction in emissions
 - Phased out cage hens and introduction of egg labelling
 - Pushed for introduction of Red Rapid buses
 - Pushed for more funding for footpaths and bike paths
 - More community consultation
- Spoke about light rail
 - Required because of growing population
 - Road system was not adequate now and was getting worse
 - Gungahlin is fastest growing area in Canberra
 - Northbourne Avenue is at peak capacity now with buses often full and not stopping
 - Population is dense in North Canberra and would support light rail
 - Future – roads are congested and parking will not be available for number of cars on the roads
- Development
 - Do not support business as usual model where more greenfield areas are developed with the city growing outwards leading to more congestion and high cost of services
 - Possible future
 - Need high quality accommodation close to transport
 - Need higher density transport corridors

- Greens' policies for election
 - Highlighted the following policies:
 - Transport - active transport
 - Housing – concerned about housing affordability
 - Smart green city – renewable energy, better urban density
 - Healthy and caring city – health, gambling
 - Safe and fair community – domestic violence, better governance
 - Living in Canberra
 - Learning and innovation

Spoke about what the Greens had achieved over the last four years, including the Dickson wetlands, started waste study, limitation on pokies at Casino.

Comment. There are problems with green bins, bulky waste, annual chemical clean up.

Comment. Please emphasise what the Greens have achieved. Light rail will definitely be an election issue – you will need to strongly emphasis what the Greens achieved – about the liveability of the city.

Q. What do the Greens mean by innovation?

A. Something new and good.

Development

Q. Why has no consideration been given to another option such as a multi-nodal city? The options presented today require people to travel to get to the transport corridors. The multi-nodal model has not been explored enough.

A. Canberra would be much different if kept to multi-centre model but the Commonwealth Government has not provided any employment at Gungahlin. The Federal Government is not putting employment at any town centre. In fact, the Federal Government has reduced public service jobs in the ACT by 10,000 and is sending jobs out of Canberra. A transport strategy for Canberra needs to be multi-nodal. Shuttle buses could be used to take people to transport corridors and then if use light rail there will be space on the roads and less congestion.

Q. Densification is leading to the destruction of green spaces, particularly the buffer between town centres. We should not build large blocks along the transport corridor on major roads. This has been given as a reason for putting in light rail.

A. Agree with concern. Can expect Canberra to expand in 20 years by 250,000 by natural growth. Where are people to live? One option is to infill in greenfield areas.

Q. There is too much emphasis on Gungahlin at the expense of other areas. What are the big issues?

A. Most important – ask about light rail. It seems that all the energy is going into North Canberra but this is the fastest growing area. Most development will be northside.

Comment: We should talk about what will happen in Woden and Weston Creek. Employment is a major problem in Woden. It is also a problem in Weston Creek and Molonglo. This is placing pressure on Cooleman Court. It is frustrating that shops have not been built at Molonglo on land sold two years ago.

Q. Why didn't the government sell the land in Coombs with the requirement that the shops open within a stated number of years after sale of the land.

A. Do not know why that did not happen.

Q. Many people are moving to Molonglo public housing but there is nothing to do in the area? What are the Greens going to do for Weston Creek/Molonglo area?

A. Transport relating to the area is changing but there are no plans to date relating to employment.

Comment: Have you any ideas about getting employment to the area?

General discussion followed and suggestions made from the floor included talking to businesses enterprises such as the airport developers or creating a niche employment area.

Q. Singapore Airlines – This is an opportunity and incentive to bring commercial activity to Canberra.

A. Agree.

Q. Need employment niche that is different in Weston Creek/Molonglo area.

A. Hospital, sporting, education. Canberra Innovation Council – premises for that Innovation Centre that does not require large complexes. Government could be encouraged to set aside an area in Molonglo.

Light rail

Cities are realising that light rail is a good thing to do. It was in the original plan for Canberra and has been a key public policy of the Greens for a long time. This would improve travel and congestion. The cost of light rail is not a lot in the whole ACT budget. The cost of Phase 1 is \$698m and the cost of roads is 10 times as much.

Q. What will be the cost of the whole network across Canberra?

A. No one knows but the option City to Mawson would be roughly the same as the Gungahlin to City link.

There is a need to integrate bus, light rail and bikes. Light rail will free up buses which can be redeployed around Canberra so that everyone will benefit. Car dependency is not sustainable. The transport survey of 2014 found that 20% of budget spent on roads. The Greens support spending limited resources on non-road infrastructure, public transport and footpaths.

Q. What is the Greens' position on light rail and sustainability?

A. Sustainable if can keep on doing it ad infinitum with little changes or impact. Light rail will use electricity. The operating fuel will use less than a bus.

Q. There are 13 stops in phase 1. Is this going to reduce congestion? People will not get out of cars at stations and then get on light rail. There will be 13 bottlenecks along Northbourne Avenue causing congestion. Did this come up in the business model? The best method is rapid buses.

A. Experience overseas and Australia is that people like light rail more than buses. More people catch light rail – park and ride. There will be a tram stop at EPIC – people can use the car parking and park and ride.

Q. If light rail is so good, why is there no light rail to the airport and Woden where there is high demand?

Q. Were electric cars and buses considered in the transport survey?

Q. What of the other people who do not use light rail or live in areas affected by it?

A. If you are living in Gungahlin then you are looking forward to light rail. The transport solution is acceptable to whole community.

Q. There was a general view across Canberra community that it feels duped that the decision to construct light rail was not taken to the 2016 election and they are not able to vote on it.

Comment. There is a problem with light rail from Gungahlin to City. There could have been a better and more useful route but it has been introduced because of agreement between ALP and Greens to form government. Not good that contracts signed 4-5 months before election when we know a lot of people not happy about it. Victoria's experience when the incoming government cancelled contracts and had to pay a lot to get out. This could happen in the ACT after the election. The decision to build light rail should have been taken to the 2016 election to see if the electorate agreed. Light rail would be good for ACT but the current route is not good and the way it has been done is poor. The electorate is disquieted about the facts and figures released in secrecy. Not enough information has been given and the feasibility report was not released.

A. The Greens had a policy for light rail which it rolled out before the last election. No one was interested. It should have been discussed and people consulted before last election. It has only become a real issue now but we would still find ourselves in the same place if it had been put off to after the 2016 election.

Issues affecting Weston Creek

Weston bus service

- A new service will be introduced in August 2016 from Woden, Cooleman Court to the City via the Cotter Road. More services will be also be made available for Coombs and Wright.

Q. What plans are there to improve health and recreation in Weston Creek/Molonglo area?

A. The CIT has moved to Tuggeranong. There is potential to use the Weston Creek site for aged care needs.

Q. Where do the Greens stand in relation to a new community centre in Weston Creek? The community centre in Woden has been wavering for two years.

A. There has been under investment in Woden and Weston Creek.

Q. Where do the Greens stand on the duplication of the Cotter Road?

A. It is not a high priority for the Greens but will not stop it happening.

Q. Where do the Greens stand on Mirvac's development of Cooleman Court?

A. This has been in the works for at least six years but has not happened. Do not expect the government to move on anything unless Mirvac move into land where community centre is now.

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes meeting 29 June 2016

Motion: That the Minutes of the previous meeting be approved as circulated.

Moved: Chris Wilson seconded: Trevor Wilson Motion carried

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 29 June 2016

Nil

Treasurer's Report

- \$7,720.02 Main Account
- \$4,279.85 Fetherston Garden Account

The government is about to pay the grant for the next financial year. The grant period has been moved from payment in January to payment to all community councils in early August with expectation that grant used by end of June the following year and return funds not spent.

Deed of Grant. The government listened to the Council and brought the period forward.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report be accepted

Moved: Chris Wilson seconded: Patricia McGinn Motion carried

General Business

Bonfire Festival

- The Council put in around 25% of the cost of running the last Festival in 2015.
- The Council is considering running something like it in 2017 if there are funds remaining from the Grant.

Annual General Meeting

- The AGM is scheduled for 31 August 2016.
- The Council is looking for committee members.

Bulk Waste Pick Up

- The ALP announced that it would introduce a yearly pick up trial in 2017.
- It is not yet clear what other parties are going to do.

Green Bin

- Green bins will be introduced in Weston Creek and Kambah in January 2017 then progressively rolled out across Canberra.

Duplication of Cotter Road

- The ALP and Liberal parties support the duplication and ensure that it would go through.
- A tender to undertake the duplication closes in the middle of August 2016.

Candidates Meeting

- All candidates for the 2016 ACT election will be invited to the next public meeting on 28 September 2016.

Q. Will Richard Farmer be invited to speak at the candidates meeting?

A. If there is a Farmer Party standing for the next election then their candidates will be welcome to come to the candidates meeting.

25th Anniversary of the Council

- The anniversary could be in November.
- The Council could be the oldest in Canberra.

Issues for 2016 ACT election

- A list of concerns for Weston Creek will be placed on the Council's website.
- Comment and input will be sought from residents to ensure that the issues are right for the community.

Comment. Need site for super health centre.

Residents' concerns

- List of concerns to Council on such matters as tree pruning, grass cutting, blocked gutters

Q. Information on what is to happen to land around the second petrol station is not available. This is the area between Weston Ponds to RSPCA and petrol site.

A. The Council will ask ACT Planning what is going to happen. Part zoned for medium density.

Q. Is there any way to find out what is happening at the community hub at Weston, particularly the school hall? What benefit is it to the community?

A. The community can hire the hall through the Weston Creek Community Centre.

Q. Hardly anyone uses it. Select groups use the school building but there is a lack of marketing of the facility. The hall was to be hired out for ad hoc events but it is not. Either have to advertise it as such or make it for exclusive use. This needs addressing.

A. It is a lifestyle area.

Weston Creek demographics

- Comment. There is a need to get away from the ageing population perception. A lot of young people moving into the area. This is especially noticeable at the schools. There are as many people 0-15 as over 65 in Chapman.

Meeting Closed: 9.13 pm

Next Public meeting: 31 August 2016 at St Jude's Primary School Hall, Holder